

Regent attends Mutah graduation ceremony

MUTAH (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah Ben Al Hussein, the Regent, attended Wednesday the graduation ceremony of the tenth batch of Mutah University's military wing. Mutah University President Eid Dahiyat welcomed the Regent and said that the university is unique in its educational policies since it turns out students fully aware of the educational and military matters. The ceremony was also attended by Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Field Marshal Abdul Hafez Mirai Kaabneh and other senior military officers.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جورديان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية - الراي

Malaysian consortium to build complex in Beirut

BEIRUT (AFP) — A Malaysian consortium plans to build a \$75 million tourist complex on the Beirut sea front which will be completed by the end of the century, officials said Wednesday. Malaysia's Premier Equiti Consortium signed an agreement on the project with Solidere, the Lebanese company charged with rebuilding war-devastated downtown Beirut, Tuesday evening. The ceremony was attended by Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri and visiting Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad. The project, on 8,000 square metres of land on the bay of Beirut, will include a five-star hotel and a residential centre and work is expected to start this year. Lebanon has embarked on an \$18 billion reconstruction programme launched after the 1975-1990 civil war.

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Roadside bombs kill two, wound two others

MARJAYOUN (AP) — An Israeli-backed militiaman and a civilian were killed Wednesday when a roadside bomb exploded near the town of Marjayoun, security officials said. The two men were driving in the Christian mountain town of Jezzine when the bomb was detonated, security officials said, speaking on customary condition of anonymity. Earlier, a pre-dawn bomb blast wounded a policeman and a civilian driving in the village of Bkassin near Jezzine, security officials said. Jezzine is controlled by the Israeli-armed South Lebanon Army (SLA). The militia helps Israeli troops patrol the border enclave Israel occupies in southern Lebanon. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the two bombings. The Iranian-backed Hizbollah has often used roadside bombs to target patrols by Israeli soldiers and allied militiamen. The militia's Voice of the South Radio blamed Hizbollah for the blast in Bkassin. On Monday, a Lebanese civilian was wounded in a similar roadside blast near Jezzine.

Trade unionist killed by armed group — newspaper reports

ALGIERS (AFP) — Rashid Zidour, a trade unionist and member of a self-defence group, was killed early Tuesday after clashing with armed Islamists near the coastal town of Tipaza, the Al Watan newspaper reported Wednesday. "Terrorists were killed in the Patriots [self-defence group] counter-attack," added Al Watan. No further details were given on the fighting which occurred near the Hadjout cemetery at 3:00 a.m. Sixteen people were killed by an armed group Saturday in the hamlet of Maurice, near the northern town of Kolea. Many of the victims, including children, were locked in a room and burned alive after the attackers set fire to the small farm, witnesses said. Some 40 people were killed in several raids on villages in the Mitidja region after a lull in the violence that coincided with June 5 elections when heavy security was deployed.

Women demonstrate for release of Hamas, opposition prisoners

GAZA CITY (AFP) — Mothers and wives of members of the Islamist group Hamas and other Palestinian opposition groups imprisoned by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) demonstrated here Wednesday to demand their release. Several dozen people, mostly women and children, gathered in front of the Palestinian legislative council headquarters in Gaza City, condemning the imprisonment of their sons and husbands as "a blow against Palestinian unity." Abdul Aziz Rantisi, a leading Hamas figure who was recently released from prison by the PNA, joined the demonstration, witnesses said. The PNA is holding in prison dozens of opposition members, especially from Hamas, which has led violent resistance to President Yasser Arafat's self-rule deals with Israel.

Crown Prince, Clinton discuss stalled peace, furthering bilateral relations

WASHINGTON (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan conferred Wednesday with U.S. President Bill Clinton on the latest developments in the peace process. Talks focussed on means of putting the peace process back on track and removing all obstacles facing it. They also discussed Jordan's view vis-a-vis the U.S. House of Representatives, recognising Jerusalem as the undivided capital of Israel, and Jordan's rejection of any change on the map of the Middle East.

The Crown Prince and President Clinton also touched upon bilateral relations and means of furthering them. Speaking to reporters after the meeting, Prince Hassan thanked the U.S. president for the establishment of the Middle East Peace and Stability Fund on Tuesday. "We had an intensive conversation over the peace process on the one hand, ways and means of resuming momentum on the other hand and issues of security in the region. I do want to

say how grateful we are in Jordan, His Majesty King Hussein, the government and the people for the president's initiative... and I hope, effectively, that the interpretation of this investment will mean a lot of joy and employment for many Jordanians." "We were talking of the social productivity package... of water projects and regional issues, for which I am sure the United States will be a great facilitator," said the Crown Prince. The U.S. formally announced the creation of

the Middle East Peace and Stability Fund, Tuesday, with an initial sum of \$100 million dedicated to help Jordan modernise and implement reforms. Washington also declared its intent to support the fund over the next several years and to ask Japan and European countries to pitch in. His Royal Highness also met U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defence John White, Wednesday, and discussed with him bilateral

(Continued on page 7)

Rifai accuses Israel of harassing diplomats

TEL AVIV (AP) — Jordan's Ambassador to Israel Omar Rifai has accused the Israeli authorities of harassing Jordanian diplomats, and said one diplomat was nearly handcuffed during a security check, a newspaper reported Wednesday. Mr. Rifai said Israeli guards at the King Hussein Bridge crossing between Jordan and the West Bank were in the habit of stopping Jordanian diplomats and searching their cars for extended periods of time, the daily Yediot Achronot said. In a strongly-worded letter to Foreign Minister David Levy, Mr. Rifai said the diplomats were being subjected to "superfluous harassment." Mr. Rifai wrote that an embassy administrator with his wife and three children was delayed for two hours last Saturday.

When the administrator protested, one of the soldiers shouted "you look like a Palestinian," and threatened to handcuff him until the search was completed, the ambassador wrote. The incident only ended after a senior Israeli officer intervened. The car had diplomatic licence plates and the official showed his diplomatic passport, but to no avail, the ambassador wrote. The paper quoted Mr. Rifai as saying this was not the first time he had complained. He had decided to write to the minister himself after 20 letters to the foreign ministry had made no difference. A week ago, the embassy's charge d'affaires was stopped at the bridge and questioned about whom he had met in Amman, and whether he was bringing

back gifts, Mr. Rifai said. The ambassador said Israeli diplomats entering and leaving Jordan were treated with the utmost courtesy, and were simply waved through. "They don't even have to get out of the car," he said. "I do not underestimate the importance of security," Mr. Rifai wrote, "but to my regret we are increasingly encountering intrusive and superfluous questions and discourteous behaviour." "If my embassy staff return with a bad taste, I can imagine what Jordanian tourists are going through," the ambassador wrote in. The foreign ministry and Jordanian embassy officials could not immediately be reached for comment. Israel and Jordan signed a peace treaty in 1994.

EU leaders urge Israel not to rule out Palestinian state

AMSTERDAM (AP) — Israel must not rule out the eventual creation of a Palestinian state, European Union (EU) leaders said Wednesday in urging the renewal of Mideast peace talks. In a bold draft declaration ending their two-day summit in the Dutch capital, the 15 EU leaders urged Palestinian leaders as well as Syria and Lebanon to keep peace efforts alive or risk "a permanent threat to the security of all."

The EU encouraged Israel not to rule out the possibility of statehood for the Palestinians. "The creation of a viable and peaceful sovereign Palestinian entity is the best guarantee of Israel's security," the leaders said. "Europe calls on the people of Israel to recognise the right of the Palestinians to exercise self-determination, without

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Erekat says Netanyahu encourages settlers to confiscate land

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat accused Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of encouraging Jewish settlers to confiscate Palestinian land and warned that clashes in the Palestinian territories will continue for as long as settlers take the law into their hands.

"Through Netanyahu's encouragement, the law was placed in the hands of the settlers... and this resulted in confrontation on the ground. It will lead to more escalation and Netanyahu bears the responsibility because he gave them the green light to do so," said Dr. Erekat. Dr. Erekat was referring to the five-day-old clashes in the West Bank town of Hebron where the Israeli

(Continued on page 7)

Three hurt as Hebron clashes enter fifth day

Israeli negotiators head for Egypt

HEBRON (Agencies) — Palestinians threw stones and fire bombs at Israeli troops Wednesday, inadvertently setting ablaze an Arab-owned butcher shop in the centre of the city. The two sides stood back temporarily as Israeli fire fighters extinguished the blaze. Clashes resumed after the fire was put out, with Palestinians throwing stones and Israelis shooting rubber bullets. Five Palestinians were hurt by rubber bullets. In addition, 10 Palestinians remained hospitalised with rubber bullet injuries sustained in clashes Tuesday.

A 12-year-old boy, who was shot by a rubber bullet in the head Tuesday, remained in critical condition. Over 100 Palestinians have been wounded by rubber bullets, two of them critically, over the past four days in a spasm of protests by Palestinians against the three-month long stalemate in the peace process. U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright deplored the violence Tuesday and called on the two sides to "make some tough decisions" to end the deadlock and resume negotiations, which have been suspended since mid-March.

Meanwhile, Israeli negotiators were due to travel to Cairo Wednesday for talks with Egyptian mediators trying to revive Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations, officials said. Egyptian mediator Osama Al Baz and Foreign Minister Amr Musa met Monday and Tuesday with Palestinian negotiators as violence flared in the West Bank city of Hebron over the three-month-old deadlock in the peace process. Mr. Musa said after those talks that "the gap remains"

Meridor quits Netanyahu's cabinet; declares conspiracy

TEL AVIV (AP) — The Israeli finance minister resigned in anger Wednesday and accused Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of having created an artificial crisis over foreign currency liberalisation to push him out of the government. Commentators accused the prime minister of acting recklessly. "Mr. Netanyahu allowed a sensitive economic issue to degenerate into another personal struggle," wrote the Jerusalem Post daily.

The opposition Labour Party said it would submit a motion of no confidence in the government next week, and urged Mr. Meridor to vote against Mr. Netanyahu and bring down his government. Mr. Netanyahu had undercut Mr. Meridor, a political rival in his Likud Party, throughout his year-long tenure as finance minister, often embarrassing him by overruling plans proposed by the treasury. Mr. Meridor suggested Wednesday that Mr.

Netanyahu held a grudge against him for not having supported the prime minister when he was implicated in a political blackmail scandal earlier this year. "The chapter is over and I can no longer continue," Mr. Meridor said on Israeli radio. "As long as I still had faith in the prime minister, I stayed in the government." At issue in the economic dispute was Netanyahu's

(Continued on page 7)



Turkish Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan (right) gestures towards Foreign Minister Tansu Ciller (left) at a news conference in Ankara Wednesday. Mr. Erbakan, modern Turkey's first Islamist prime minister, wrapped up talks with his coalition allies on Wednesday before heading for the presidential palace where he resigned (Reuters photo)

Turkish premier resigns paving way for Ciller to lead coalition

ANKARA (AFP) — Necmettin Erbakan, modern Turkey's first Islamist prime minister, resigned on Wednesday nearly one year after coming to power and amid a bitter fight with the pro-secular Turkish army over creeping Islamisation. Despite his plump and genial-looking exterior, Mr. Erbakan, 71, is a fierce ideologist and tough political survivor who has tirelessly spread the Islamist message to every corner of Turkey. For about six months after he took office on June 28 last year, Mr. Erbakan shunned between his Welfare Party's Islamist views and political pragmatism. Despite his earlier anti-Western and Islamist

rhetoric, Mr. Erbakan extended the mandate of a U.S.-led force monitoring northern Iraq, ratified key defence agreements with Israel and stepped up privatisation efforts until the turn of 1997, winning even the praise of liberal and pro-Western groups. But efforts by his Welfare Party to introduce Islamist measures into social life and his moves to drag Turkey into closer ties with Islamist states like Iran, Syria and Libya, instead of bolstering Ankara's traditionally Western-oriented policies caused tension with the army and secular groups. The powerful military, which sees itself as the

guardian of Turkey's secular heritage, this month declared an all-out war and accused Mr. Erbakan's Welfare of inciting its supporters against the secular regime, after he failed to implement an army-backed plan to crack down on Islamists. Mr. Erbakan's conservative coalition partner, Foreign Minister Tansu Ciller, has persuaded the prime minister to step down to hand over his job to her in an effort to reduce tensions with the military. Known as "Hoca" (master), Mr. Erbakan was born in 1926 in Sinop, on the Black Sea.

(Continued on page 7)



Photo of the slain Syrian family murdered over a money dispute Tuesday. Jamal Abdo Majdoub and his wife Manal Othman were stabbed to death and their child, Khaled, choked to death and buried in a farm near Madaba by Fateh Rajadain Jlassi, also a Syrian national.

Police capture killer of Syrian family; child found buried

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A 35-year-old man Wednesday confessed to the brutal murder of a 38-year-old man and his wife found stabbed and burnt in their apartment near the University of Jordan and their two-and-a-half-year-old son found buried in a farm near Madaba, police said.

Jamal Abdo Majdoub had his throat slit and was stabbed in several parts of his body, while his wife Manal Othman, 35, who was found burnt in her bedroom, was tied up and had her mouth gagged, and had suffered from several stabs in the chest and abdomen. The couple, both Syrian, were discovered by Civil Defence Department (CDD) fire-fighters who were called early Tuesday morning to extinguish a fire in an apartment at the Engineering Housing Complex opposite the university. Police then announced that



Fateh Rajadain Jlassi, confessed murderer

the couple's child Khaled was missing and sent his photo to all police departments in the Kingdom. Director of the Amman Police Department Brigadier General Hisham Ensour told reporters Wednesday that the suspect, also a Syrian national identified as Fateh Rajadain Jlassi, "confessed he committed the crime for revenge over an old financial

(Continued on page 7)

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Netanyahu meets EU envoy in new bid to revive peace talks with Syria

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met with EU Mideast envoy Miguel Moratinos Wednesday in a renewed effort to revive Israeli-Syrian peace talks, officials said.

Mr. Moratinos was scheduled to leave later Wednesday for Damascus to hold talks with Foreign Minister Farouq Sharaa and possibly President Hafez Al Assad, the officials said.

Israeli press reports said Mr. Netanyahu would send a message with Mr. Moratinos asking Mr. Assad to resume peace negotiations which have been suspended for more than a year due to differences over the future of the

Israeli-annexed Golan Heights.

The Yediot Aharonot newspaper said Mr. Netanyahu would reaffirm in his message Israel's willingness to resume negotiations on the basis of U.N. resolutions 338 and 242 which call for the exchange of occupied Arab lands for peace.

But Mr. Netanyahu's government has so far refused to recognise that the resolutions explicitly require a return of the Golan Heights, a strategic plateau overlooking northern Israel which the Jewish State seized in the 1967 war.

Syria has been demanding that the negotiations be resumed exactly where they left off in February 1996

under Israel's former Labour government.

At that time, Israel accepted the principle of a return of much of the Golan Heights in exchange for security guarantees and a full peace treaty with Syria.

Mr. Netanyahu has refused to be tied to the Labour government's stance.

The Yediot Aharonot quoted Mr. Moratinos as telling Mr. Netanyahu's political advisor, Uzi Arad, Tuesday that he had received positive messages from Damascus about a Syrian willingness to resume negotiations.

Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, who is in charge of the Syrian track of the peace process, has also

been more upbeat recently about the possibility of resuming the negotiations, fuelling media speculation that there may be some flexibility in the Israeli position on the Golan.

The renewed push to revive the peace talks comes after Israeli army chief of staff, Amnon Shabak caused alarm in Israel by saying the Syrians had prepared themselves for a possible surprise attack on the Golan.

Gen. Shabak stressed that there was no indication a Syrian military action was imminent, but his statement nevertheless hinted at Israel's concern over the possibility of conflict if the stalemate in negotiations continues.



An Israeli soldier on Wednesday plugs his ears as another takes aim with a rifle fitted with a scope and a nozzle used to fire single rubber-coated steel bullets. Clashes between stone-throwing Palestinians and Israeli forces continued for the fifth consecutive day, but were not as fierce as in past days. Three Palestinians were wounded in the legs by rubber bullets. The policeman holds a concussion hand grenade (Photo by Reuters)

Iraq to resume crude oil exports after new U.N. distribution plan

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraq will resume oil exports once a new food distribution plan has been finalised with the United Nations. Oil Minister Amer Mohamad Rashid said Wednesday.

Mr. Rashid, quoted by the official news agency INA, said the plan for distribution of food and medicine is currently being discussed, under the U.N. oil-for-food accord.

The minister, meanwhile, is negotiating with oil companies for future sales of Iraqi crude, INA reported.

Iraq's U.N. Ambassador Nizar Hamdoun said Monday that his country has decided to suspend the oil sales, citing delays in imports of badly-needed food and medicine.

The oil-for-food deal allows \$2 billion worth of Iraqi crude exports in exchange for humanitarian supplies, to be distributed under U.N. supervision.

Baghdad has been under U.N. sanctions, including an embargo on lifeline crude exports, since its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

According to U.N. officials, Iraq is expected to submit to the United Nations by the end of June its distribution plan for the second six months of the oil-for-food deal which came into effect on Dec. 10.

The accord was renewed earlier this month.

Iraq has sold its \$2 billion worth of oil, with its last exports at the end of May. But the U.N. Sanctions Committee has approved only a third of the food and medicine contracts which Iraq submitted in exchange for the sales.

Baghdad has been under U.N. sanctions, including an embargo on lifeline crude exports, since its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Beast attacks children in southern Egypt

QENA (AFP) — A mysterious wolf-like beast which has plagued several Egyptian towns has struck again, attacking three children in southern Egypt before being shot dead, police said Wednesday.

The attack occurred late Tuesday in the Abu Halima village of Arment, 728 kilometres south of Cairo, when the creature known locally as a "Silawa" or she-wolf attacked a group of children playing outdoors.

The beast bit and seriously injured a two-year-old boy in the face and attacked two other boys aged 12 and 14 in the legs. All three had to be hospitalised, police said.

Villagers tracked down the animal and shot him dead, they added.

Last October a similar beast killed four children and wounded 28 others before it was shot dead by soldiers in Arment, on the western bank of the Nile near the city of Luxor.

The animal struck again in April savaging 23 people in a Cairo suburb.

Vets and scientists believe the animals — which have large jaws, long noses and wolf-like tails — live in the desert on the edge of the Nile and have been driven into inhabited areas in search for food.

Egypt prosecutors seek 15-year jail sentence for suspected Israeli spy

CAIRO (AFP) — An Egyptian prosecutor demanded a 15-year prison sentence for an Israeli accused of spying for the Jewish state, as the trial resumed here Wednesday.

Prosecutor Hisham Badawi asked for "a 15-year prison sentence with hard labour" for Israeli Druze Azzam and for two Israeli Arab women, Zahra Yusef Jeris and Mona Ahmad Shawahna, being tried in absentia.

Badawi, who launched a vehement attack against Israel, also demanded a "25-year sentence of hard labour" for Azzam's Egyptian co-defendant Emad Ismail.

Azzam, a 34-year-old engineer who was working for an Israeli textile firm in Cairo, and Ismail, a colleague, have pleaded not guilty to charges of spying for Israel. The pair were arrested in November.

Mr. Badawi accused Ismail of "having betrayed his country for a mediocre price to satisfy his pleasure" a reference to an alleged affair with one of the Israeli Arab women who are both accused of having recruited Ismail.

He said the sentence requested for Ismail was heavier because he is a state employee, a teacher at a government school, who had taken a sabbatical leave to work for the textile firm.

Mr. Badawi also charged that Azzam had admitted to having given Ismail clothes which contained sensitive information written in invisible ink.

Ismail's lawyer, Ahmad Bakr, pleaded for his client's acquittal and said he should actually be rewarded because he had gone to the authorities willingly to inform them of the situation.

Azzam's lawyer Farid Dib was expected to address the court following a midday recess.

Mr. Badawi also launched a tirade against Israel, which signed a peace treaty with Egypt in 1979.

"Israel wants to harm Egypt's national interests. For Israel, peace is aimed at undermining Egypt's interests and then they speak of normalisation," he said.

The State Security Court is expected to announce its verdicts Thursday.

The trial, which opened in April, has been marked by anti-Israeli demonstrations and a brawl involving anti-Israeli lawyers and supporters of Azzam's lawyer.

Egyptian man kills wife over 30 cents and some cigarettes

CAIRO (AFP) — A security guard shot dead his wife and his daughter after his spouse refused to give him one pound to buy some cigarettes, the Al Ahram government newspaper reported Wednesday.

Gamal Abdul Fattah, 42, killed his wife Saadeya and their 11-year-old daughter Shayma with a shotgun in the town of Benha north of Cairo "after his wife refused to give him a pound to buy some cigarettes," the newspaper said.

In the teeming Cairo neighbourhood of Imbaba another man killed his wife when she refused to give him 13,000 pounds (around \$4,000) to buy a plot of land to build a house, stabbing her to death, the newspaper said.

Nadia Abdul Hamid, 46, was stabbed to death by her second husband Ahmad Abdul Aal, 26, the newspaper said.

Al Ahram did not say when the murders took place.

Syrian vice president in Iran for talks on Israel, Turkey

Khaddam says Turkey's presence in northern Iraq inspired by the Israelis

TEHRAN (AFP) — Syrian Vice President Abdul Halim Khaddam arrived Wednesday in Iran for talks on Israel and the Turkish military incursion into northern Iraq, the official IRNA news agency said.

Mr. Khaddam is bringing a message from Syrian President Hafez Al Assad

for his Iranian counterpart, Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, IRNA said.

The Syrian vice president said the talks "will centre on Israeli-Turkish cooperation, Turkey's occupation of northern Iraq and Israel's recent provocations in the area."

He said the Turkish military presence in northern

Iraq, where Ankara is fighting separatist Turkish Kurds of the Kurdistan Labour Party (PKK), was "a flagrant violation of the U.N. charter."

Turkey's presence there was "inspired by the Israelis and the result of Turkey's cooperation with Israel," he said.

Iranian first Vice Presi-

dent Hassan Habibi reiterated Iran's condemnation of the U.S. House of Representatives' non-binding resolution recognising Jerusalem as Israel's "united capital."

"It's an erroneous and misplaced decision, which goes against international law," he said, according to IRNA.

Syria has been Iran's main ally in the Arab World since the Islamist revolution in Iran in 1979.

The visit comes after Turkey and Israel boosted military ties. The two countries plan to carry out joint naval manoeuvres with the United States in the Mediterranean Sea. More than 25,000 troops

are involved in the Turkish operation launched May 14 against PKK bases in northern Iraq.

When Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati visited Syria last month, he accused Israel of "seeking a new pretext to impose a new war on the region."

Mubarak gives green light to restoration of Cairo's Islamic quarters

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak Wednesday gave the green light to a project to develop and restore Cairo's Islamic quarter, Housing Minister Mohammad Ibrahim Suleiman said.

Mr. Suleiman told reporters after a meeting with Mr. Mubarak that the president will soon inaugurate the first phase of the project which involves the restoration of Al Azhar Mosque, centre of Sunni Islam

authority.

"President Mubarak is offering a huge achievement to the Muslim people by developing the guiding light of Islam — the Al Azhar Mosque," Mr. Suleiman said.

The prestigious Al Azhar University Mosque is one of Egypt's oldest and was built by the Fatimide rulers who founded Cairo in 969.

The project also provides for the creation of a pedestrian zone in one of

Cairo's busiest areas, linking Al Azhar with the nearby Al Hussein Mosque, and is expected to be completed by 2000.

Al Hussein Mosque, which dates back to the 19th century, is built on a

site where a sanctuary was erected in the 12th century for the head of Imam Husayn, a grandson of the Prophet Mohammad and one of the key imams of Shiite Islam.

JORDAN TELEVISION

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PROGRAMME TWO

15:30 Holy Koran
15:35 French Programmes
16:00 Out of This World
16:30 They Came From Outer Space
18:00 French Programmes
19:00 News in French
19:30 News Headline
19:35 Step By Step
20:00 World Echo
20:30 New Talk Show — The Oprah Winfrey Show
21:10 Kung Fu
22:00 News in English
22:30 Feature film
01:05 Soccer Match-Peru vs. Uruguay

PRAYER TIMES

05:50 Fajr
05:25 (Sunrise) Dubai
12:37 Dhuhur
16:17 'Asr
19:45 Maghreb
21:23 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweifish, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel.
632785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Church of the Annunciation

Tel. 637440.

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757.

Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366.

Anglican Church Tel. 652826.

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.

Amman International Church Tel. 5516345.

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 834328.

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457.

The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932.

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691.

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295.

English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology
It will be hot on Thursday and Friday with temperatures above their annual average. In Aqaba it

will be hot and winds northerly moderate. Seas will be calm.

Mini/Max. Temperatures

Amman 20/34

Aqaba 27/41

Deserts 18/38

Jordan Valley 25/41

Yesterday's high temperatures:

Amman 32, Aqaba 40 Humidity readings: Amman 20 per cent, Aqaba 22 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Abbas Al Hakim 885446

Dr. Ayman Al Mahtash 875748

Dr. Jamal Jharab 847351

Dr. Arafat Al Ashhab 602507

Firas pharmacy 661912

Ferdows pharmacy 778336

Al Asema pharmacy 637055

Naironli pharmacy 623672

Al Salam pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Shmeisat pharmacy 637660

Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:

Dr. Mazin Abu Bakir 276852

Al Quds pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:

Dr. Hilal Al Sayyid 986702

Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade 617101

Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police 843402

Traffic Police 896390

Public Security Department 630321

Hotel Complaints 605800

Price Complaints 661176

Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467

Amman Municipality Complaints 787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101

Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 680100

Jordan Electricity Authority

Electric Power Company 815615

RJ Flight Information 08-53200

Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32

Khalidi Maternity 644281/6

Akileh Maternity 642441/2

Jabal Amman Maternity 642362

Malhas, J. Amman 636140

Palestine, Shmeisani 607071

Shmeisani Hospital 669131

University Hospital 845845

Al-Muasher Hospital 667227/9

The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37

Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6

Al-Muhajreen Italian, 777101/3

Al-Bashir 775111/26

Army, Marka 891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50

Amal Hospital 674155

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital

..... (09)983323

Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560

Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732

Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)990990

IRBID:

Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555

Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272775

Ibn Al Nafes Hospital (02)247100

AQABA:

Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200 where it should always be verified.

Information on other flights are supplied on phone 08 (52700) or 08 (53250).

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

08:05 Sanas (RJ)

09:15 Muscat (RJ)

11:15 Moscow (RJ)

11:35 Abu Dhabi (RJ)

12:55 Amsterdam, Montreal, Toronto (RJ)

13:00 Doha (RJ)

13:10 Paris (RJ)

13:20 Athens (RJ)

13:25 London (RJ)

18:15 Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)

21:10 Cairo (RJ)

21:20 Larnaca (RJ)

21:25 Jeddah (RJ)

22:00 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)

22:25 Abu Dhabi, Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta (RJ)

Three children drown in Jordan Valley farm pool

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Three children Wednesday drowned in a water reservoir at a farm in the Jordan Valley, according to Civil Defence Department (CDD) officials.

A CDD official told the Jordan Times that the three children, a brother, his sister, and their friend went to swim in a farm in the Jofeh area in South Shouneh.

The official said that Ali Issam Abdul Fatah, 10, went into the pool and when he started to drown his 13-year-old friend Mahmoud Hassan Nahar attempted to rescue him but also drowned.

The official added that Ali's sister, Nisreen, 14, started screaming and calling for help and then jumped inside the water reservoir but also drowned.

According to the official, it took CDD from less than 30 minutes to pull the children from the water reservoir, "but they were all dead."

"The reservoir's bottom was muddy and filled with weeds, which hindered the

rescue operation and also helped in the quick drowning of the children," the CDD official said.

He added that the pool was not surrounded with a barbed wire, "which if placed around the water reservoir could have prevented the children from swimming in this dangerous area."

Last year, the CDD reported 73 swimming incidents in the Kingdom resulting in 55 deaths and 26 injuries. Most of these incidents involved individuals swimming in dangerous areas such as dams, where swimming is generally prohibited, CDD statistics said.

CDD officials cited unfamiliarity with swimming, lack of barbed wires around water reservoirs, and lack of public swimming facilities as the prime reasons for drowning incidents.

Meanwhile, in other accidents in the Kingdom a 51-year-old woman was killed in Wadi Qiar area in Zarqa after being run over by a bulldozer, according to Public Security Department (PSD) reports.

Shua Fandi was killed

instantly after being struck by the heavy vehicle, driven by Ali Awad, 44.

Police said they have arrested Mr. Awad and are investigating the incident.

In Amman, police said they have arrested two people who allegedly stole 29 gas cylinders from houses in the city suburbs, the reports said.

According to the report, a Shmeisani resident complained to police that two men, riding a pick-up truck, entered his garage and took four gas cylinders, then fled the scene.

The report said that the men entered a side-road, parked the truck and started running.

"Some citizens who saw the men running, approached the pick-up truck and emptied its tyres to prevent them from escaping," the report said.

The two suspects, who, according to the reports, were arrested shortly after the incident, were identified only as A.S., 26, and T.F.J., an Egyptian national, both with previous criminal records.

New phones for Balqa

SALT (Petra) — The Jordan Telecommunications Company (JTC) has begun a national telecommunications project within the Balqa region that includes the installation of new telephone exchanges in Salt, Fubeis, and Ain Al Basha. JTC Balqa Director Eid Khawaldeh announced Wednesday.

With these exchanges the JTC hopes to supply 82 areas within the Balqa region with telephone service, said Mr. Khawaldeh, adding that the projects, part of a national effort to boost telephone services around the Kingdom, will cost JD14.5 million.

In Salt the JTC will install a new JD8.9 million electronic exchange providing 20,797 telephone lines to Allan, Kafrein, Karameh, Al Arida, Rumeim, Subeih, Yaraqa, Saru, Sweimeh and Deir Alla.

The Fubeis telephone exchange, which will cost JD 2.5 million, will cover the town and its surrounding villages, supplying 5,000 new telephone lines. In Ain Al Basha the exchange will provide 9,400 telephone lines at a cost of JD 4 million.

\$100m U.S. aid goes to needy, water projects, Anani says

WASHINGTON (J.T.) — Half of the \$100 million additional aid promised to Jordan by the U.S. administration on Tuesday will be used to finance the government social safety net programme and the other half will be spent on water projects, Deputy Prime Minister Jawad Anani, said.



Jawad Anani

Dr. Anani, who is accompanying HRH Crown Prince Hassan on his current visit to the U.S., was quoted by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, as saying

that the two projects are ready to start pending the

acquisition of funds.

The government had announced a \$500 million package social safety net programme to improve the living standards in the refugee camps and other underprivileged areas in Jordan over a three-year period.

Dr. Anani said that in his talks with the U.S. administration Prince Hassan discussed the question of Jerusalem and stressed that Arab Jerusalem is an integral part of the Arab lands occupied in 1967.

He said that the Crown Prince pointed out that the retreat in the peace process and the economic difficulties facing the Palestinians are creating despair throughout the region and that all parties need to exert efforts to help the Israelis and Palestinians to resume peace negotiations.

Dr. Anani said that the U.S. aid to Jordan was an expression of Washington's appreciation of Jordan's role in the peace process.



AGRICULTURE MINISTER RECEIVES AMERICAN DELEGATION: Minister of Agriculture Mijhem Khreisha Wednesday meets with members of the Council of U.S. National Interest to review the latest developments in the peace process. Mr. Khreisha reiterated Jordan's supportive role for a comprehensive and just peace in the Middle East region (Petra photo)

Majali, Egeland review bilateral relations

AMMAN (Petra) — The Assistant Norwegian Foreign Minister Jan Egeland met Wednesday with Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and said later that his country will increase its aid to Jordan in a number of fields.

"We already cooperate with Jordan in the water sector and in issues pertaining to the Palestinian refugees and we are working with Jordan to set up a regional centre for water data in Amman," Mr. Egeland, who was on a one day visit to the Kingdom, said.

He told the press that his visit to Jordan was within the framework of his country's drive to further bolster its relations with the Kingdom in all fields.

"We hold similar views and ideas about the peace process and we wish to see peace becoming a fact on the ground for the sake of improving the standard of living for all peoples in the region," Mr. Egeland added.

Dr. Majali had reviewed with the Norwegian official and his accompanying delegation Jordan's relations with Norway and explored areas for further cooperation. The two officials also discussed the latest developments in the region and the peace process.

Mr. Egeland also Wednesday met Minister of Education and Higher Education Munther Masri and discussed with him bilateral cooperation in the cultural and educational fields.

Majali urges hospitals to provide special clinic for civil servants

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Wednesday urged the health ministry to assign special clinics at government hospitals for government employees and their families.

During a visit to the Ministry of Health, Dr. Majali also called for the creation of a special fund to finance the treatment of needy citizens who are not covered by medical insurance.

"It is the right of every citizen living in Jordan to be covered by some kind of health insurance," said the prime minister at a

meeting with Minister of Health Ashraf Kurdi.

Dr. Majali said that the government is currently providing health insurance services to government employees and pensioners as well as needy citizens, but that other Jordanian citizens have to bear part of the cost of medical treatment.

Praising the health ministry for providing medical treatment in its health centres and hospitals to all public sector employees, Dr. Majali said that the ministry should grant more authority to its departments in all the gov-

ernorates.

Dr. Kurdi responded that the ministry is dividing Jordan into three main regions: north, centre and south adding that more powers will be given to the health departments in each region.

He outlined the ministry's current plans to improve its services, noting that the ministry is giving attention to continued training for its medical staff and is also establishing libraries within hospitals provided with medical references.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Joint Jordanian-Egyptian Committee to meet

CAIRO (Petra) — The Joint Jordanian-Egyptian Higher Committee will open a meeting in Cairo on July 5 to discuss economic, trade and political cooperation. The two-day meeting will be co-chaired by the prime ministers of the two countries, according to Jordan's Ambassador to Egypt Nayef Al Qadi, who said Jordanian and Egyptian officials will hold a two-day meeting June 29-30 to prepare for the meeting.

Jordan, Chile sign visa agreement

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan and Chile Wednesday signed an agreement on exempting Jordanians and Chileans holding diplomatic or official passports from procuring visas prior to entering the other country. The agreement signed by Minister of Interior Nahir Rashid and Chile's Ambassador to Jordan Jorge Iglesias aims to facilitate entry into either country according to a press statement from the embassy of Chile in Amman. It said that the agreement which is the first of its type between Jordan and a Latin American country reflects the excellent relations between the two.

Karak restoration project underway

AMMAN (Petra) — The Department of Antiquities and the Natural Resources Authority (NRA) announced Wednesday that it has finalised three stages of a four-stage plan for the restoration of the Karak castle at a cost of JD600,000. NRA Director Khaled Sheyab said. He added that the last phase of the project is due to be completed in the coming few months and that the work entailed building retaining walls around the castle and reconstructing beams and supporting columns. NRA teams have been helping in the process by conducting geological and geophysical studies of the area.

Agricultural marketing workshop starts

AMMAN (Petra) — A workshop on marketing agricultural products started at the Professional Association Complex in Amman on Wednesday. Specialists from the Agricultural Marketing Organisation and the Greater Amman Municipality, and engineers from Jordanian universities will participate. Discussions will cover exporting produce by air and land, refrigeration of agricultural products and pricing policies.

WHAT'S GOING ON

CINEMA

* "Cafes Y Barro" (pts. 5,6) at the Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman on Thursday at 5:00 p.m.

* "Jermiah Johnson" at the American Center, Abdoun on Thursday at 5:00 p.m.

CONCERT

* Musical performance by Zaidoun Sager at the Royal Cultural Centre on Thursday at 8:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Works by Namat Al Naser at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman, until June 30.

* Paintings by contemporary Iraqi artists entitled "Ecology and Environment in Iraqi Art" at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, until July 12 (except Tuesdays).

* Photo exhibition of Hong Kong, sponsored by the Chinese embassy, at the Royal Cultural Centre, until June 19.

* Works by Abdul Basit Naqqash and Sa'd Hussein entitled "Heritage and Culture" at the gallery of the Jordan Plastic Artists Association, Jabal Weibdeh, until June 21.

* Art exhibition by Ibrahim Al Abdali at the Orient Art Gallery, Shmeisani, Issam A'Jouni Street, until June 19.

* Spring Exhibition of Plastic Art '97 at Greater Amman Municipality, Ras Al 'Ain, until June 30.

* "One-of-a-Kind" artists' book exhibit at the American Centre, Abdoun, until June 25.

* Exhibition of works by Farouq Lambaz at Darat Al Fann, Jabal Weibdeh, until June 19. Also displaying an exhibition by architectural photographer Said Nusibah entitled "The Farthest Mosque" and by contemporary Arab artists.

Jubilee students taste hospitality of their Wadi Rum peers

By Nadia Mukhlis
Special to the Jordan Times

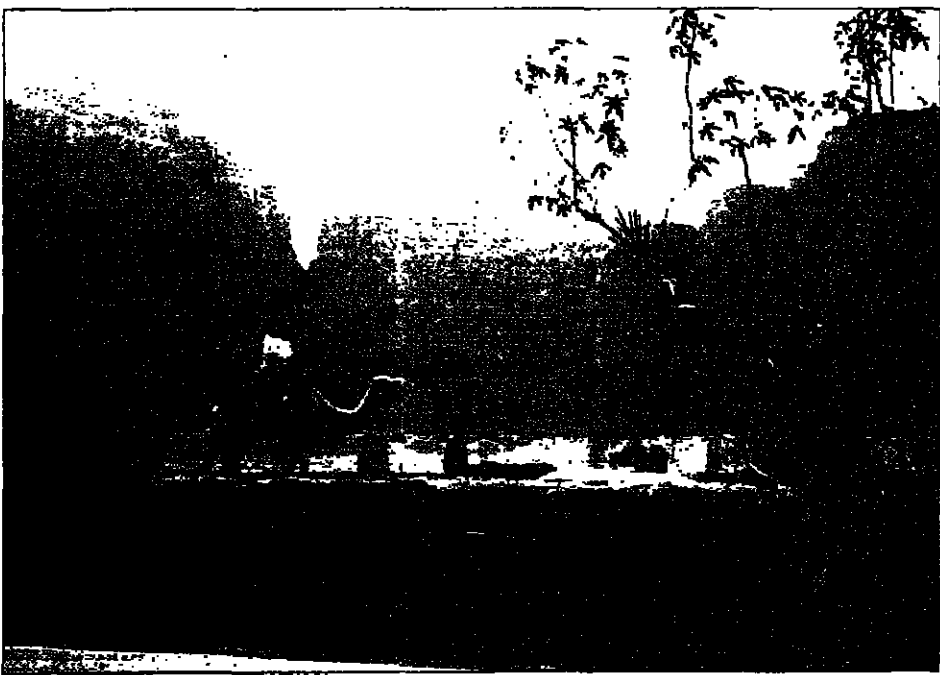
AMMAN — A comprehensive camping expedition to Wadi Rum for a group of Jubilee School students was arranged last week as a continuous pursuit to fulfil the objectives of the Friends of Environment Society (FOE).

The field trip, which lasted three days and two nights, was co-sponsored by the Jubilee School and the Wadi Rum Society, bringing together bedouin and urban students of similar ages, allowing them to interact with each other in the harsh desert environment, explained FOE President Raouf Dabbas.

The 12 students, whose ages ranged between 16-18 were accompanied by their teachers, Suhair Hyari and Sawzan Abu-Jama'a.

Students were mesmerised by the majestic beauty and vastness of the landscape, said Ms. Hyari, adding that bedouin tents were set up by the local Zalabia Bedouin Tribe as a gesture of hospitality.

The Wadi Rum bedouins make their living from tourism in the region, explained Rana Naber, Director of the FOE Media



A student from the Jubilee School enjoys a camel ride in Wadi Rum during a field trip last week

Committee. "Camping gear, four wheel vehicles and camels are few of the things the locals rent to visitors, that earn them income."

The government, with the cooperation of the World Bank, is developing the region by installing electricity, telephone cables and new tourist rest houses with full

accommodations, said Ms. Naber.

"The bedouins are very friendly and represent the spirit of the area, but they fear that the new changes will affect their income," added Ms. Naber.

Fawzi Zayadeen, an expert on Rum archaeology, was at the site and explained to the students the ancient history of Rum

and the Nabateans' influence in the region.

The three-day trip included a jeep ride into the desert, a two-hour hike across the desert and the surrounding mountains, with the company of nine students from Zalabia tribe, and a visit to the Shalaleh natural spring, said Ms. Naber.

Dr. Zayadeen told the

students that all the ancient inscriptions in the region refer to the area of Rum as "Irum" and that the name is mentioned in the Holy Koran as being the mighty city of Add and Thamoud.

All students were encouraged to express their unique cultural heritage and traditions: some wore traditional "abayehs" and "hattas," and some sang traditional bedouin songs, said Ms. Naber.

The interactions between the Bedouins and their Urban peers was sincere and forthcoming, said Mr. Dabbas.

"What was evident was that these students have more in common than we think. The only difference is the method in which similar activities were accomplished."

For instance camel riding and cycling, mountain hiking and walking in crowded streets and so on," Mr. Dabbas said.

On the last day, the local students made tea for everyone and prepared a type of bedouin bread called "Arbood" which is placed under the ashes of the fire, said Mr. Dabbas.

According to Mr. Dabbas, this unique area of Wadi Rum, is suffering

from environmental negligence, not because of the local disregard for nature but because of the negligence of the authorities.

A comprehensive clean up campaign of the village was organised on the last day of the students' stay to create environmental awareness among the young in the Kingdom, said Mr. Dabbas.

The Jubilee students were asked to come up with sketches at the end of their visit depicting their impression of the bedouins, said Ms. Naber.

The sketches show the respect and honour bedouins have for guests entering their homes, their generosity and sincerity.

The FOE is an independent, non-governmental, non-profit organisation founded by citizens interested in implementing environmental community-based development projects.

It was founded in 1994, and officially registered in 1995 and its main objectives are encouraging creativity and innovation, utilising natural energy and providing training for young students.

Taleban and allies seize northern Afghan city

KABUL (R) — Pro-Taleban forces have captured the northern Afghan city of Kunduz, forcing a commander loyal to opposition leader Ahmad Shah Masood to flee, a Pakistan-based news agency reported Wednesday.

The Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) said local commanders allied with the purist Islamic militia had gained control of the city, about 250 kilometres north of Kabul, Tuesday evening.

AIP said a mixed force of Taleban and fighters loyal to mainly ethnic Pashtun local commanders had forced one of Mr. Masood's commanders, Mir Alam, to flee to the border with Tajikistan, though it was not clear if he had crossed it.

Taleban officials said 90 per cent of Kunduz province, important for its link with neighbouring Tajikistan, was now in the hands of the purist Islamic militia and its allies.

The local commanders had previously shown sympathy for the Taleban, putting up white Taleban flags in their areas when the mainly ethnic Pashtun movement briefly controlled the northern opposition capital of Mazar-i-Sharif last month.

A Taleban force was driven from Mazar-i-Sharif with heavy losses on May 28 by ethnic Uzbek troops loyal to General Abdul Malik, who reneged on his earlier defection to the Taleban, and the Shiite Muslim Hezb-i-Wahdat militia. A Hezb-i-Wahdat spokesman in Mazar-i-Sharif, contacted by satellite telephone Wednesday, said Hezb-i-Wahdat and Gen. Malik had sent reinforcements into Kunduz province Tuesday.

He confirmed that Kunduz Airport had fallen to the Taleban and their allies, but said heavy fighting was continuing. No independent account of the situation was available.

AIP identified the pro-Taleban local commanders in Kunduz as Arif Khan of Jamiat-i-Islami, Arbab Mohammad Hashem of Hizb-i-Islami and Arbab Mohammad Ghulam of Ittehad-i-Islami.

It said Bashir Baghlani, a Hezb-i-Islami commander in the town of Baghlan, 65 kilometres south of Kunduz, had also apparently reached an agreement with the Taleban.

An estimated 3,000 Taleban fighters arrived in Baghlan last week after opposition attacks forced them to abandon the town of Pul-i-Khumri 30 kilometres to the south.

Opposition spokesmen had said earlier that Mr. Baghlani had agreed to disarm and hand over the Taleban fighters to opposition forces, but there was no sign this had happened.

The Taleban's success in winning over local commanders in Baghlan and Kunduz eases what had appeared to be a difficult predicament for the force expelled from Pul-i-

Khumri.

The force had crossed the Salang Pass over the Hindu Kush mountains into the north last month to try to link up with the Taleban in Mazar-i-Sharif, but Mr. Masood's guerrillas then closed the pass, cutting off the Taleban supply line from Kabul.

The Taleban and their new-found allies now control Kunduz Airport, which should enable the force to be resupplied.

In another development, AIP said the Taleban's supreme leader, Mullah Mohammad Omar, had ended his first visit to Kabul since his blackbearded warriors captured the city in September.

AIP said the reclusive Mr. Omar had returned to his headquarters in the southern city of Kandahar Tuesday after spending 10 days in the Afghan capital, where he did not appear in public.

The Taleban have vowed to impose strict Islamic rule across Afghanistan, a goal which their ethnic minority opponents in the north see as concealing a drive for Pashtun hegemony.

Meanwhile, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor Posuvalyuk was quoted by the Interfax News Agency Tuesday as saying Afghanistan's Taleban movement is incapable of representing the country abroad.

In remarks to the head of the U.N. mission in Afghanistan, Norbert Holl, Mr. Posuvalyuk said the Taleban had "no reason to pretend to represent Afghanistan on the international scene."

The Russian official met last week in Islamabad with a Taleban official to appeal for reconciliation in the country, where an anti-Taleban alliance recently announced the formation of a new "government" including ex-President Burhanuddin Rabbani, ousted by the Taleban in September.

Moscow has consistently backed the opposition to the Taleban, but Mr. Posuvalyuk said that Russia would adhere strictly to the principle of non-interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs.

Russia has a direct interest in a negotiated solution in Kabul to ward off destabilisation of its allies in the Commonwealth of Independent States that share borders with Afghanistan — Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan — Mr. Posuvalyuk noted.

Pakistan last month became the first country to recognise the Taleban Islamic student movement as being in charge of Afghanistan. Only the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia have followed suit.



Diana, Princess of Wales and American Red Cross President Elizabeth Dole, wife of former Republican presidential candidate Bob Dole, sit together during a press conference calling for a global ban on anti-personnel mines (Reuters photo)

Diana tiptoes through U.S. minefield

WASHINGTON (R) — Diana, Princess of Wales, tiptoed through a U.S. political minefield Tuesday as she pressed a Red Cross campaign for a global ban on anti-personnel land mines, "these evil weapons."

With Diana appearing on behalf of the British Red Cross, a bipartisan group of senators seeking a prompt ban on new deployments hitched their wagon to her star.

"I commend (American Red Cross President) Elizabeth Dole and Lady Diana who have worked so hard to help the victims," Senator Patrick Leahy said on the Senate floor.

Sen. Leahy, a Vermont Democrat, introduced a bill last week that would bar the Pentagon from planting anti-personnel mines anywhere in the world except Korea after Jan. 1, 2000.

So far, 57 of the 100 senators have co-sponsored the measure, which dovetails with a Canadian drive to put a mine treaty in place by the end of the year.

The Clinton administration, however, favours a much slower route to a ban on mines, through the U.N.

Conference on Disarmament. The Pentagon is reluctant to surrender a weapon until others, notably China and Russia, have agreed to do so.

"We just believe that there needs to be an all-inclusive approach to this thing, which can only be accomplished through the conference on disarmament," a Pentagon spokesman, Captain Michael Doubleday, said Tuesday.

In the Senate, Senators Leahy and Chuck Hagel of Nebraska, the chief Republican co-sponsor of the bill barring future deployments, used the occasion of Princess Diana's appearance to turn up the heat on Mr. Clinton.

"I believe the time is now," Sen. Hagel, a combat veteran twice wounded by land mines in Vietnam, told the Senate. He said the administration's go-slow approach "could extend the life of these cruel weapons by a decade or more."

Mr. Clinton was pursuing an approach "that could allow killing and maiming of thousands more civilians before America finally decides to lead," Sen. Hagel added.

Princess Diana did not directly address the Clinton slow-track approach at a sun-splashed news conference outside the headquarters of the American Red Cross.

"Obviously, I am more than happy to be here to lend support to the American Red Cross campaign to ban anti-personnel land mines and to raise funds for the victims of these evil weapons," she said.

After her speech, the princess did not respond to a question from a reporter about Mr. Clinton's refusal to embrace the Canadian initiative, which she praised.

But, in a departure from her prepared text, she said: "This visit to Washington for me is timely" because of a Belgian government-hosted conference next week to follow up on the Canadian drive to draft a global treaty for signing this year.

Anti-personnel land mines "planted" during war and often forgotten when the fighting ends — kill or maim 2,000 people every month, often civilians, a Red Cross fact sheet said.

Australia Senate demands stronger action on republic

CANBERRA (R) — Leftist members of the Australian Senate Wednesday threw back at Prime Minister John Howard what they called inadequate plans for a national debate on republicanism.

Non-government senators united to amend legislation for a national convention on removing Britain's Queen Elizabeth as head of state because Mr. Howard wanted the body to be partly chosen by voluntary postal voting.

Voting in Australian elections is always compulsory. "This legislation is the most despicable attempt to defraud Australians of what they rightly deserve," Labour Senator Shayne Murphy told the Senate.

Mr. Howard, currently visiting Britain and due to meet the queen Friday, is an avowed monarchist. His government has said the republic issue will be approached by his method or

not at all. Former Labour Prime Minister Paul Keating began the push for an Australian republic in 1992, saying he hoped to break final ties with Britain by 2001, a century after Australian statehood was achieved.

But Mr. Howard defused the republican issue in the run-up to the 1996 general elections by promising to set up a national convention to discuss it.

Labour derided that as obfuscation, a committee that would generate a lot of discussion but no action. Voters were unworried, however, and Mr. Howard won the election on the basis of economic policies.

Opinion polls since the election have shown that only about half of Australian voters favour a republic.

Mr. Howard silenced critics last week when he appointed Republicans from both sides of politics

to head the convention, which is scheduled for December. Voting to elect half of the convention members is due in August.

The government has previously canvassed the possibility of simply appointing all delegates to the convention, dispensing with an election altogether.

The Senate voted down the voluntary ballot also because it saw it as the thin edge of the wedge to end compulsory voting in all elections.

Conservative politicians, suspecting that their followers were more likely to vote voluntarily, have long called for an end to compulsory ballots.

But Labour Senator John Faulkner said Australians regarded voting as a social obligation, like paying taxes.

"It is a tried-and-true method," he said. "It is the Australian way."

U.S. lawmakers seek to lift ban on medicines for Cuba

WASHINGTON (R) — A dozen Democrats and Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives Wednesday unveiled legislation demanding an end to the embargo on food and medicine to Cuba.

The lawmakers, backed by doctors, business executives, religious leaders, Cuban Americans and former elected officials, said it was time for "an end to the inhumane embargo of food and medicines."

House Banking Committee Chairman Jim Leach, an Iowa Republican, and Representative Esteban

Torres, a California Democrat, were set to hold a news conference Wednesday morning introducing their bill.

"The legislation would remedy the unintended, negative impact of current U.S. policy and steer it clearly toward the goal as stated by law — to support the Cuban people," the lawmakers said in a press release.

"It is reprehensible that we are punishing innocent people. Our policy of condemning Castro should not come at the expense of people's lives and health," Mr. Torres said.

The lawmakers argue that current U.S. policy makes the licensing process for the sale of medicine so arduous that it creates a de facto ban.

Other lawmakers, including Representatives Lincoln Diaz-Balart, a Florida Republican, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, also a Florida Republican, and Robert Menendez, a New Jersey Democrat, plan to hold a news conference rejecting "disinformation" by Mr. Leach and Mr. Torres and their supporters.

FBI arrests suspected CIA shooter

WASHINGTON (R) — The FBI announced Tuesday the apprehension of Mir Aimal Kansi, the suspected gunman in a 1993 attack outside CIA headquarters which killed two CIA workers and wounded three other people.

It said Mr. Kansi, a Pakistani immigrant, had been delivered abroad by unidentified Afghan individuals to the custody of U.S. authorities, and that he had been brought to the Virginia suburb of Fairfax, where he would face trial.

FBI officials declined to give any details about how Mr. Kansi was apprehended or by whom, and whether they would collect the \$1 million reward that had been offered in the case.

Spokesmen for the Justice Department and FBI declined to confirm an ABC "World News" report that Mr. Kansi was located in a hotel in Pakistan, and Pakistani officials agreed after much discussion to allow his transfer to the United States.

One law enforcement official said the White House had issued orders not to disclose the details of the apprehension.

The FBI and the Fairfax County Police announced on Feb. 9, 1993, that they had begun a worldwide search for Mr. Kansi, the prime suspect in the Jan. 25, 1993, shooting spree outside the CIA's headquarters in Langley, Virginia.

The FBI had placed Mr. Kansi on its top ten most wanted fugitives list. He faces state murder charges and could get the death penalty if convicted.

Authorities have said ballistic tests showed an AK-47-type rifle traced to Mr. Kansi was the weapon used in the shootings. They were unable to say what his motive may have been.

The shooting spree occurred as CIA employees waited in their cars to turn into the agency's headquarters during the morning rush hour. All but one of those wounded were CIA employees.

FBI Deputy Director William E. Spillane and Acting Director of Central Intelligence Agency George Tenet issued a statement hailing Mr. Kansi's arrest.

"This arrest is the result of our unwavering determination to find and bring to justice the individual charged with the heinous attack on CIA employees four and a half years ago," Mr. Spillane said.

"Kansi's arrest is another significant accomplishment in our unceasing effort to combat terrorism both here and abroad. Today's action should serve notice of our commitment to apprehend and prosecute those who seek to harm Americans both here and abroad," he said.

Mr. Spillane said the apprehension reflected the efforts of the CIA, FBI and the State Department.

Mr. Tenet said, "We have always kept the faith and never wavered in our commitment to find the individual charged with this attack. Today marks a clear triumph of good over evil."

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright also applauded Mr. Kansi's capture and arrest, saying it underscored Washington's determination "to bring to justice those who attack Americans, however long it takes."

Mr. Kansi has given his birth date as Feb. 10, 1964. Officials of the Immigration and Naturalization Service said Mr. Kansi entered the United States on Feb. 27, 1991 at John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York. About a year later, he applied for political asylum at the Arlington, Virginia, office of the INS.

Law enforcement officials have said Mr. Kansi caught a connecting flight to Pakistan a day after the CIA shootings.

U.S. ambassador leaves Congo for Kinshasa

BRAZZAVILLE (AFP) — The U.S. ambassador to the Congo left the war-torn capital of Brazzaville for Kinshasa early Wednesday, as a ceasefire called the day before appeared to be holding.

Ambassador Aubrey Hooks said it was a "temporary" departure necessitated by the instability of the situation and added that he hoped to return as soon as possible, possibly in two or three weeks' time.

The Congolese capital was quiet early Wednesday as a three-day ceasefire agreed between government and rebel forces Tuesday appeared to be holding.

Mr. Hooks said the ceasefire offered a chance for peace, but admitted that it was fragile.

He was escorted by French soldiers to the airport shortly after 8 a.m. (0700 GMT) and was accompanied by 11 embassy staff and a Peace Corps volunteer.

France, the former colonial power, which drafted in hundreds of extra troops to evacuate and protect foreign nationals, Wednesday continued its withdrawal which is expected to be completed over the next few days.

Government and rebel forces agreed a three-day ceasefire from midnight Tuesday in the Congo's capital Brazzaville, giving international mediators something on which to build in talks due to resume in neighbouring Gabon.

With mortar and small arms' fire reduced to sporadic exchanges Tuesday,

peace hopes were further boosted by an announcement that an international mediation effort led by Gabon President Omar Bongo would continue to search for a solution in Libreville.

Senegal's Foreign Minister Moustapha Niasse announced the resumption of talks late Tuesday, after the high-level international mediation committee met in the Gabonese capital for two hours.

"The mediation is back on," he said, adding that the committee would recall one of the warring factions' delegations — "the one posing the problem" — to unblock progress to a peaceful solution to the conflict, which has claimed up to 2,000 lives since its outbreak on June 5.

He did not specify the faction, or the problem.

Nine hours of talks failed to reach a compromise Monday, but efforts redoubled throughout Tuesday to keep the peace effort rolling.

The mediation involves four African heads of state and officials from several other African countries. Apart from Mr. Bongo, Idriss Deby of Chad, Ange-Felix Patasse of the Central African Republic and Alpha Oumar Konare of Mali are also attending.

On Monday, they met representatives of President Pascal Lissouba and his foe, former President Denis Sassou Nguesso, separately, but the talks did not reach a stage where the sides were brought together face to

face.

France urged the international committee to "take every initiative to bring about a rapprochement of the Congolese parties."

Mr. Sassou Nguesso appealed to the mediators to "have patience and continue the negotiations," voicing fears of what he called "a generalised confrontation" should the talks fail.

That view was supported by U.N. and Organisation of African Unity (OAU) envoy Mohammed Sahnoun. "It is urgent. I would even say it could be dramatic for the people and for the country because this could be the start of a general destabilisation," he said.

Mr. Sahnoun, the U.N. envoy for Africa's Great Lakes region, participated in the Libreville talks, and Tuesday endorsed the idea of deploying a buffer force in Brazzaville.

Such a force "will be useful. We hope to convince the parties concerned of this goal," Mr. Sahnoun, who also represents the Organisation of African Unity, told French radio.

An official ceasefire in Brazzaville has been in force since last Wednesday but has been largely ignored.

The latest accord was drawn up by the mediation of Brazzaville Mayor Bernard Kolelas and signed at the French embassy by senior officers from both of the warring factions.

Under the agreement, the airport is to be "demilitarised" to enable commercial and humanitarian

flights into and out of the stricken capital, and a "mixed observer unit" put in place with the help of French forces, to monitor the agreement.

Talks at a local level between the two sides were expected to resume Wednesday at the French embassy, diplomatic sources said. They are expected to focus on arrangements for the clean-up of the city, in particular technical and sanitary repairs, after over 12 days of fighting left much of its infrastructure in tatters.

The French disengagement continued, with around 15 plane loads of troops and equipment due to have left by nightfall, further reducing the French contingent, which numbered around 950 Tuesday morning.

A French military source said the operation would be completed by Saturday at the latest.

"It's very difficult to make an estimate, bodies haven't been collected, others have been buried quietly by their families or thrown into the Congo River," said Vincent Nicod, the head of the ICRC mission in Kinshasa.

"Many wounded have not been treated, others haven't even gone to hospital where there are all kinds of shortages, bandages, disinfectants and antibiotics," he added.

The ICRC flew one tonne of medical supplies and food to Brazzaville Tuesday, but this was "far from sufficient for hospital needs," he added.

Islamic body urges Muslims to ban human cloning

CASABLANCA (R) — A meeting of Islamic religious experts and scholars urged Muslim countries to ban human cloning but to allow the process to be used for animals and plants.

A spokesman for the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ISESCO), which sponsored a four-day forum of delegates from 12 countries, told the closing session:

"The symposium recommends the ban of normal human cloning unless extreme cases occur in future which will then require the Sharia (Islamic law) permission."

The religious and medical symposium, co-sponsored by ISESCO, in Casablanca issued a series of

recommendations related to the "Islamic view on modern medical issues, including human cloning."

Among these was a call for ISESCO members to follow up human cloning, scientific findings and to meet "to determine the Sharia view on these issues."

The Casablanca meeting said it agreed on the principle of "cloning techniques and genetic engineering in the field of animals and plants."

Earlier, ISESCO Director-General Abdul Aziz Orhman Altwajri of Saudi Arabia called on delegates to find a "religious-and-science based Islamic perception" to give guidance on the issue of human cloning.

He said the ever-acceler-

ating pace and acute competition among scientific researchers provided "evidence that science is treading an unsafe path and evolving towards immoral objectives."

The Casablanca meeting urged Islamic governments "to draw up the necessary legislation to close doors directly and indirectly in the face of foreign research institutions and experts to stop them using Islamic countries as a field for human cloning experiments and its publicity."

According to an Egyptian delegate, some ISESCO members during the four-day discussions would not discuss the cloning issue because "It was not mentioned by the Holy Koran."

Others were more flexible and wanted to see sci-

ence pursue its experiments on animals and plants before taking a final stand, he said.

"It is a negative position to simply close the door and adopt a rigid position against human cloning... We should wait and see," said another delegate.

The Casablanca recommendations are not considered as a final "fatwa" — religious ruling — nor a final scientific opinion.

ISESCO is joining the world community in moving towards setting up rules for scientific research in the field of genetic engineering, including human cloning, the organisation said.

The organisation is a cultural arm of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference.



4 DIE IN FRENCH FLOODS: Firemen in St. Martin de Boscherville near Rouen in northwestern France clean up following heavy flooding caused by freak storms. Four people died in related accidents in this region Monday (Reuters photo)

U.S. debate over slavery apology raises questions about such gestures

WASHINGTON (AFP) — As the United States considers apologising to blacks for enslaving their ancestors, a debate has opened over the value of "mea culpas" multiplying around the world for everything from forced prostitution to famine.

President Bill Clinton said over the weekend that the proposed national apology for slavery could be "quite important," while his political foe, House Speaker Newt Gingrich, dismissed it as futile "emotional symbolism."

Struggles over national penitence have been waged here before with similar sole searching and squabbling.

Former President Gerald Ford issued an informal and belated apology in 1976 to Japanese-Americans interned during World War II and the move was followed by cash compensation in 1988.

Mr. Clinton himself has already apologised to victims of radiation experiments conducted during the cold war and to black syphilis patients who were left untreated during the infamous 1932 Tuskegee experiment.

Such gestures have also been offered by other nations after equally painful deliberations.

Japan grudgingly apologised for forcing some 200,000 "comfort women" to serve as prostitutes for

Japanese soldiers during World War II and then backed those words with some "atonement payments."

Australians are now battling over an apology for the removal of some 100,000 Aborigine children from their families during the 1960s and New Zealand has issued regrets — and money — for its treatment of the indigenous Maori population.

Britain's new prime minister, Tony Blair, has made apologetic noises publicly for the potato famine that starved some 1.5 million people to death in Ireland and last year French President Jacques Chirac offered his regrets for the Vichy government's collaboration with the Nazis.

The U.S. debate over slavery comes as Mr. Clinton launches a year-long effort to address racial divisions.

The Democratic president's tentative support for the move and House Speaker Gingrich's opposition mirrors a typical ideological split on the issue, according to American University political historian Alan Lichtman.

But while the left is more apt to side with the oppressed and the right with the oppressors, Mr. Lichtman warns: "If the conservatives are smart they will not make this an issue. This is not a winning issue."

There are some notable exceptions in the political divide over redressing the American slave trade.

The proposed congressional apology for slavery was co-sponsored by an equal number of Republicans and Democrats while civil rights leader Jesse Jackson, an unquestioned liberal, has called it a bad idea and questioned whether an apology would have any "substantive value."

Mr. Lichtman acknowledged that financial compensation is unlikely due to the scope of the sin in question but he argued that though they have been dismissed as mere words, apologies in themselves can have merit.

"Words can wound and words can heal," said Mr. Lichtman. "It might create a better climate for civil rights. It's been a pretty rough climate for civil rights for the past 15 years."

Mr. Clinton would agree. Much of his race relations initiative focuses on words, with town-hall style meetings and an advisory board to bridge the continuing racial divide in the United States.

The president, who grew up in the segregated South, maintains that racial tension is often created by misperceptions and misinformation and will seek to promote understanding by educating the public.

China 'will not gobble up Taiwan'

HONG KONG (R) — China has pledged not to "gobble up" Taiwan and said the thorny issue need not sour Sino-U.S. relations.

The assurance came from Foreign Minister Qian Qichen, who said in an interview published Wednesday that the "one country, two systems" formula adopted for the Hong Kong handover on June 30 was originally initiated for Taiwan.

On Tuesday, China expressed serious concern and dissatisfaction to Washington over a visit to the United States by Taiwan's Foreign Minister John Chiang, a grandson of Chiang Kai-Shek.

Beijing and Taipei have been diplomatic rivals since the communists won the Chinese Civil War and sent Chiang Kai-Shek's Nationalist troops fleeing into exile on the island in 1949.

Mr. Qian, interviewed in Beijing by Hong Kong's South China Morning Post, said: "The question posed was whether we should achieve reunification of the two sides of the Taiwan Strait under the socialism we pursued here and gobble up Taiwan or under the so-called democracy and freedom of Taiwan and so gobble up the mainland."

"We believe neither is a desirable choice," the foreign minister added in an interview published less than two weeks before Hong Kong reverts to China after 156 years of British colonial rule.

"We believe that this method is not right because it is not a matter of me swallowing you or you swallowing me," Mr. Qian added.

Taiwan rejects the Hong Kong formula and says it is committed to reunification, but under democracy and a free market. China has threatened to invade if Taiwan declares independence.

Taiwan is a sensitive issue in Sino-American relations in the lead-up to the Hong Kong handover, where Secretary of State Madeleine Albright has decided not to attend the swearing in of a provisional legislature hand-picked by Beijing.

The provisional body will replace an assembly elected in 1995.

Mr. Qian insisted in the interview that Taiwan need not cause a crisis in bilateral relations.

"The principles for handling it have already been laid down in the Sino-U.S. joint communiqués," he told the newspaper.

"As long as the spirit enshrined in them is abided by, this problem, even if it is not resolved in the end, will not necessarily provide an obstacle for Sino-U.S. relations."

New H. Kong laws to be applied from the moment of handover

HONG KONG (AFP) — Sweeping new security laws will be applied in Hong Kong from the moment the territory reverts to Chinese rule at midnight on June 30, an official with the incoming administration said Wednesday.

Laws restricting demonstrations and imposing new controls on political and other organisations would formally become law at about 4:00 a.m. on July 1 but would be applied retroactively, a spokesman for the China-appointed Provisional Legislature said.

Human rights groups and the pro-democracy camp immediately attacked the move, which they said would damage public confidence and could breach international treaties.

The widely-criticised body has already passed the legislation, along with other bills to take effect after the handover, but all will undergo a "verification" process on July 1.

The legislature will meet at 2:45 a.m. that day to pass

the "reunification act," which will then be signed by future Hong Kong leader Tung Chee-Hwa, formally making all the bills law.

"The purpose of that is to avoid any legal vacuum," Provisional Legislature spokesman Simon Wong told AFP.

The Provisional Legislature will replace the current elected body, which will be disbanded at midnight on June 30.

Current laws on demonstrations and political and other organisations will be repealed at the moment of the handover by order of China's National People's Congress and so would need to be replaced immediately, Mr. Wong added.

But there would be some flexibility in the opening hours of July 1 and acts which were technically illegal may in fact be allowed, he said.

The details of that flexibility were still being worked out.

The new laws will require police permission for any

demonstrations and ban local organisations from receiving foreign funds.

At present, the police require an advance notice of demonstrations and there are no restrictions on foreign funding of Hong Kong groups.

The new laws will largely reinstate colonial legislation abandoned here in recent years.

The pro-democracy camp is planning an early challenge to the laws, with demonstrations scheduled to straddle the moment of the handover and angrily attacked Wednesday's announcement.

"It is ridiculous to have a criminal law which is retrospective," Democratic Party Chairman Martin Lee said.

"It will make this legislature a worldwide laughing-stock," added Mr. Lee, a veteran barrister.

"It is displacing a common-law principle that most legislators around the world abide by."

Hong Kong Human Rights Monitor Director

Law Yuk-Kai said the move could breach international covenants on civil liberties.

"I am astonished to think that they believe they can do this retroactively," he said.

"If this is the first thing they do after the transfer of sovereignty, they are sending a very serious signal. It is a clear intention by this body that it intends to undermine the rule of law by legislating retrospectively against our entrenched rights."

"It shows how clearly these people fail to understand international human rights standards."

Amnesty International Hong Kong representative Robyn Kilpatrick said the move would "raise concern about the future of civil liberties in Hong Kong."

"Many people are already concerned by the Provisional Legislative Council and this is unnecessary and likely to add that concern," she said.

U.S. Senate passes bill to pay debts to U.N.

WASHINGTON (R) — The U.S. Senate Tuesday passed a \$12 billion measure to pay \$812 million in debts to the United Nations and to fund and reorganise the State Department.

Conservatives had resisted paying off United Nations debts that the U.N. estimated at more than \$1 billion.

The White House pushed for the deal to make back payments that were seen as a diplomatic blemish, but opposed some of the bill's measures to reorganise the State Department.

To get the bill through the Senate, the White House agreed to putting conditions on repayments to the U.N., which critics

said were needed to reform the huge international bureaucracy, which they branded as wasteful and intrusive on national sovereignty.

Before passing the legislation by a vote of 90 to 5, the Senate rejected an amendment pushed by Indiana Republican Richard Lugar to strip the 38 preconditions for payments to the U.N.

Sen. Lugar argued that most of the debt was the U.S. share of peacekeeping activities that the United States supported.

"In essence we asked other nations to send in peacekeeping forces — men and women — to Bosnia and other places while we contributed

funds. But we have never sent the funds," he said.

Sen. Lugar said the preconditions — such as requiring shrinking U.N. agency budgets and personnel reductions — likely would be untenable to the body, and so debt repayments, as well as sought-after reforms, would not be made.

Congress has bickered for several years over the U.N. debts and over the legislation to reorganise and consolidate foreign affairs agencies.

Under the Senate bill, two independent agencies — the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and the U.S. Information Agency — would be merged into the State

Department. The Agency for International Development would remain separate.

Backers said a new streamlined foreign affairs structure was needed with the end of the cold war, while opponents said changes should be dealt with individually instead of under a sweeping congressional order.

The Senate bill must be meshed with legislation the House of Representatives passed last week. It had no payment plan for debts to the U.N., but had a State Department restructuring plan that was more modest and palatable to the White House.

Hosokawa quits opposition amid signs of moves to form new Tokyo coalition

TOKYO (AFP) — Former Japanese Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa quit the opposition New Frontier Party Wednesday amid signs he was distancing himself from moves to set up a new coalition government.

"Things are not going as I expected and I wonder about the party's prospects under the current framework," Mr. Hosokawa told a news conference, apparently alluding to party leader Ichiro Ozawa.

Mr. Hosokawa said he planned to become an independent member of parliament. The New Frontier Party has now lost more than a dozen lawmakers since being defeated in general elections last October.

Party members aligned with Mr. Hosokawa, including Lower-House Deputy Shinji Tarutoko, were also poised to leave. "Somebody has to follow him and I'm prepared to do that," Mr. Tarutoko was quoted as saying.

Mr. Ozawa dismissed Mr. Hosokawa's resignation as the action of "one individual" in remarks reported by Kyodo News.

Koichi Kato, secretary general of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), who strongly opposes a new coalition, welcomed the move by Mr. Hosokawa, who has his own power base in the opposition party, Jiji Press said.

"It's an extremely major

development. I think his defection is based on policy differences with others," Mr. Kato was quoted as saying, apparently referring to Mr. Ozawa. "I think he made a serious decision as a politician."

Mr. Hosokawa wants to distance himself from Mr. Ozawa's moves to form a new coalition between right-wing members of his opposition party and the minority LDP government of Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto, news reports said.

The LDP rules with the support of two small parties through a parliamentary accord put together by Mr. Kato, who strongly opposes the idea of a conservative alliance with the New Frontier Party.

While talk of such an alliance has been around since last year, speculation has recently intensified following reports of a clandestine meeting last month between chief cabinet secretary Seiroku Kajiyama, Construction Minister Shizuka Kamei and LDP veteran Yasuhiro Nakasone, another former prime minister.

Mr. Kajiyama, one of the most powerful men in the LDP, has long been heading calls for a conservative coalition while Mr. Kamei recently abandoned his support for Mr. Kato's three-party arrangement and joined the Kajiyama camp. Mr. Nakasone is credited

with engineering a backroom deal with the opposition earlier this year by arranging a rare meeting between Mr. Hashimoto and Mr. Ozawa.

Following the meeting, the opposition supported special government legislation enabling the United States to keep using military bases on the southern island of Okinawa even if local land leases expire.

The Social Democratic Party, the LDP's ally in parliament, opposed the legislation, reviving talk that the three-party alliance should be replaced by a coalition between the LDP and conservative opposition forces.

In 1993, Mr. Hosokawa formed the first non-conservative government in 38 years after the LDP lost power following an internal split engineered by Mr. Ozawa.

He resigned the following year amid accusations about dubious financial transactions. His successor, Tsutomu Hata, lasted only two months and has since set up his own party after quitting the New Frontier Party last year.

Mr. Hosokawa headed the New Japan Party which merged with other opposition parties at the end of 1994. Since the merger, Mr. Hosokawa and his allies have lost much of their appeal, with many blaming Mr. Ozawa who has traditionally played a backroom role in Japanese politics.

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Funding the right cause

HIS ROYAL Highness Crown Prince Hassan spoke on behalf of all Jordanians when he thanked the American administration and Congress for recognising that for peace in the Middle East to hold it must address the needs of the man in the street. It is only proper in this context to remind the magnanimous American leadership and all the other parties concerned that when this country and its leadership opted for a peace treaty with Israel they did so not for the sake of obtaining rewards but because they genuinely and deeply believe that only peace can solve the multitude of problems besetting the region and pave the way towards a future that is free of fear and full of promise. It is in this vain that we look at the American gesture as an indication of the American leadership's commitment to achieving a lasting peace in the region.

It did not elude the Crown Prince to adequately remark that Jordan finds it also most appropriate "to focus on the all-important development of the Rift Valley," that borders Jordan, Palestine and Israel. What the Prince wanted to tell his hosts, and Jordan's neighbours, was that we are committed to working together, to bringing people to cooperate in developing the concept of a comprehensive and lasting peace.

President Bill Clinton did have a magnificent vision when he called his new initiative: The Middle East Peace and Stability Fund and kept it open for new amounts of aid coming either from appropriations of the U.S. Congress or from the Group of Eight with whom the president said he will discuss the initiative in Denver next week.

By keeping it open also the president and his administration are sending two messages in two directions at the same time: One to the Israelis that their annual aid of \$3 billion may be further cut; and one to other countries in the region that they stand to benefit from the fund if they follow Jordan's example and pushed for peace.

We therefore hope that the \$100 million initial instalment in the fund that goes this year and the next to Jordan will expand to finance other projects here in the Kingdom and elsewhere in the region on the basis that it will enhance regional cooperation and lead to easing tensions.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for Al Ra'i daily Wednesday criticised the United Nations for its double standard dealings with Israel and Iraq saying that the secretary general cancelled a mission the U.N. organisation entrusted him with, concerning the Israeli settlement plans in the occupied Arab lands, because, he said, Israel has imposed "unacceptable conditions" on this mission. Almost at the same time, said Tareq Masarweh, the U.N. Security Council is meeting this week to discuss measures to be taken against Iraq for its refusal to offer first-class facilities to the U.N. inspection teams. The writer said that while Israel is allowed to impose its "unacceptable conditions" on the U.N. organisation and to abort the world organisation's mission in the Israeli-occupied Arab lands, Iraq is threatened with the most severe action for its refusal to submit to orders which the Iraqi leadership insists are encroaching on Iraq's national interests. It is regrettable, said the writer, that it is those Arab countries which pretend to be dismayed and sad at seeing the Palestinians facing the atrocities of the Jewish state that are financing the U.N. mission in Iraq and helping the U.S.-led coalition to impose its will on the Arab country and cause suffering to its people. The writer asked why Israel should be above the international law and maintain its aggression and its occupation of Arab lands and why the Iraqis should continue to face injustice and suffering.

A WRITER for the weekly Al Majd demanded that Jordan take steps to move closer to Syria and Iraq because the country's national interests lie with the Arab countries close to Jordan and not with Israel. Fahed Rimawi said: We demand that the Jordanian government dedicate at least half of the efforts it is exerting towards closer ties with Tel Aviv to improving relations with Baghdad and Damascus. If the government boasts that it has been able to regain 25 million cubic metres of water from Israel, which has been stealing Arab water resources, it should boast that Iraq has for decades supplied Jordan with huge amounts of oil free of charge, said the writer. It should be emphasised, he said, that Israel is the only country in the Middle East that has expansionist designs and is bent on aggression and massing mass destruction weapons, and that Jordan can only be guaranteed safety through its close ties and solidarity with its Arab neighbours. The writer recalled that a Zionist meeting held in Baltimore, U.S., in 1942, decided that the Jewish state should be established in Palestine as soon as possible, that Jordan should be annexed to the Jewish state and that the surplus Palestinians and Jordanians should be transferred to Iraq and settled there.

The View from Academia

Happier time and time management

Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh

GENERALLY, OUR society is not good at managing time. I shall spare you comments on the waste of time at our public (and private) establishments and institutions, where you have to obtain so many unnecessary signatures (at times twice by the same person in two separate visits), where you have to wait until the employee who is supposed to serve you finishes a conversation over the phone with a friend about the wedding they attended the night before or a dull story about the forthcoming elections with another fellow employee, where you have to sit in a committee meeting whose coordinator either cannot simply coordinate or rambles on and on about matters in a deadly anecdotal and casual way, and so on.

Rather, I would like to confine my comments to the mismanagement of time at the personal level.

I believe that it is still a true fact (though the picture is rapidly changing) that people in our society work less than in many other societies, especially those of the so-called developed world. For one thing, the working hours for most employees in the public sector are from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (in actuality from 8:30 to 1:30). In the private sector, the situation is different, with employees working more hours.

The point here is that there is a significant amount of time at people's disposal. And yet, when you ask people (friends and acquaintances — again generally speaking) why they do not do this or that or come to this or that function, the answer is almost always "we are busy." Busy doing what?

One could argue, of course, that people in our society have to attend many social functions and events — more so (much more so) than in other parts of the world. There are the weddings just mentioned. On average, and in the summer time, most families in our part of the world attend two to three weddings a week. But there are also the funerals: once, twice, three times a month (on average). If you are a relative of the deceased, you have to make yourself available for the whole condolence period (three full days).

But there are also other occasions and functions which you also have to attend: the circumcision of the newly born males, the birth of the newly born, the passing of the tawfihi successfully by relatives, their completion of the various stages of university education, their arrival back from pilgrimage, the many fights among cousins, etc. The list could go on indefinitely.

Occasions of sorts do consume much of the time in this part of the world, and many are having a rough time with these "social events." Nevertheless, I believe that there is still time available for a lot to do.

Let's remember in this context that many people amidst us, unlike many in others, do not have serious hobbies or activities to pursue: zero involvement in charity projects, zero involvement in sports, zero involvement in art creation or art appreciation, zero involvement in reading, zero involvement in most everything.

There are people in our society who spend most of their time after work drinking tea and coffee, smoking or chat-

ting and gossiping. This is a serious problem, and no wonder many of them feel old at the age of forty, fifty or sixty. Such carefree, activity-free life may have its charm and rewards, but on the whole it is both boring and killing. Psychologically and physically it affects the lives of those who indulge in it negatively.

The problem and the solution, in part at least, lie with time management. People in other parts of the world (especially the developed part of the globe) work harder than we do and have less time to spare than we do. And yet they find time to engage in all types of social functions, in sports activities, in serious hobbies of sorts.

How do they find time? The answer is simple: time management. Of course, they have to deal with less hassle from civil servants and relatives, but probably the amount of time they can spare (minus or plus the activities they engage in) equals what we can spare; things balance out in the end.

But why are we not as good at investing our time more fruitfully and enjoyably than they do? It is mainly because we have not been brought up (in the family, the school, the university, society) to manage our time effectively. We say we are "busy" while we are drinking coffee and gossiping. Planning, in general, is a serious problem in our part of the world, and this is a problem which our educators, sociologists, psychologists and anthropologists have to think about a little more seriously.

I am sure that life will be a lot happier and more rewarding if we learn how to manage our time better.

Return of Golan to Syria — 'a very remote possibility'

By G. H. Jansen

THE GOLAN Heights, like the mountains of Kashmir in the Indo-Pakistan confrontation, is a major regional casus belli, but a very pleasant, almost idyllic casus belli, like sublime Kashmir.

On the political plane, the Golan is one of the principal obstacles to the resolution of the Arab-Israeli dispute. The heights, located in the south-western corner of Syria, was occupied by Israel in the 1967 war and very nearly recaptured by Syria in the October 1973 Arab offensive. Today the Golan remains under Israeli occupation. Syria says there will never be an Syrian-Israeli peace settlement until Israel withdraws totally from the Golan. On this prospect

Israel has a very equivocal position, with some Israeli leaders and parties saying that Israel could withdraw partially, while others insist that there can never be even the smallest withdrawal from the Golan. And if there is no Israeli-Syrian agreement, because of differences over the Golan, there cannot be an Israeli-Lebanese agreement and the present Israeli-Jordanian agreement cannot long endure.

On the physical plane, the Golan Heights are a strategic asset for whoever controls them, a source of water and a

rich agricultural area. To reach the Golan from Israel, we drove along the Jordan River frontier to the southern edge of the Sea of Galilee and climbed some 1,500 metres to the spare plateau covered with brush and dried grasses where we began our visit at kibbutz Afik, a small cooperative settlement sheltering beneath recently planted trees.

Like these trees, the 16,000 Israeli settlers, who live in 31 similar small colonies and the town of Qazrin, have, since Israel reasserted its control in 1973, sunk deep roots in the soil of the Golan. The settlers claim to have good relations with the 16,000 strong Druze community whom they employ to do manual agricultural work.

Among the reasons given by Israel for retaining the Golan is the 'very obvious' fact that this is a verdant area and agriculturally most productive. With a cool, fresh climate, an abundance of water and fertile volcanic soil, the Golan produces a variety of crops: besides wheat, the area is most suitable for fruit cultivation. Settlers grow apples, pears, cherries and avocados, as well as large-size mangoes. Most noteworthy are the many varieties of grapes which sustain a flourishing wine industry. The impressive Golan wine industry in

Qazrin has won several awards for its product which, though not yet of the highest standard, is quite drinkable. The political importance of the Golan's fertility was stressed a fortnight ago when an Israeli magazine broke a story that quoted a famous Israeli military leader, General Moshe Dayan, who ordered the attack on the Golan during the six-day war. He was quoted as saying that he regretted that order because, as Israel's political establishment has claimed since then, Israel did not attack to halt Syrian bombardments from the Golan of Israeli settlements lying below the heights, but in order to please Israeli settlers who simply wanted more land for farming. But the Golan Heights, he said, 'has since become a political and military liability for Israel.'

In the small avalanche of expensively-produced publicity material that descends on visitors to the Golan, Qazrin is designated as a "city" but it is in fact not more than a town, with a population of 6,000, though a solidly built one with supermarkets and a variety of shops and a cinema. But it still has no school or hospital and inhabitants of Qazrin must go to settlements on the shore of the Sea of Galilee for these amenities. The Jewish population of the

Golan is growing, most recently through immigration of Jews from Eastern Europe and Russia who have settled in on the heights easily and quickly.

According to the Golan Residents' Association, which has mounted a strenuous campaign against withdrawal, the chances of Israel pulling out of the Golan are virtually nil. Association spokespersons insist there is not going to be a repeat on the Golan of the forcible evacuation of Jewish settlers at Yamit, when Israel returned the Sinai to Egypt. Then settlers had to be dragged out of their homes, kicking and screaming. Since 1994, when the previous Labour government began to talk seriously to Syria about the Golan, the settlers have mounted a very well organised protest campaign all over Israel. One of its slogans is: "Protect the Golan, because the Golan protects you." Another one reads: "A third of Israel's water derives from the Golan" while "The Golan is less than half of one per cent of Syria's total size," implies that Syria can easily continue doing without the Golan.

In the settlers' brochures the history of an early resistance to evacuations is described, though it is only hinted that history can repeat itself. History says that in 66

A.D. during a general Jewish revolt against Roman rule, the Golan settlement of Gamla fought the Romans to the bitter end as at the fortress of Massada, near the Dead Sea. The Romans killed 4,000 Jews at Gamla and another 5,000 were killed fleeing down the mountain slope of the Golan Heights. Only two women survived.

The Golan, it is claimed, is a place of Jewish antiquity for Israeli archaeologists have found the remains of no less than 90 synagogues which they have unearthed in the area. One settler spokeswoman mentioned that settlers and archaeologists promptly followed the Israeli army into newly conquered territories. The Golan is also a place of Jewish refuge in present times because tens of thousands of Jews from Haifa and central Israel fled to Qazrin and the settlements when missiles from Iraq fell on Israel during the 1991 Gulf war and from northern Israel when Shiite Muslim guerrillas fired Katyusha rockets into the Galilee during Israel's 1996 "Grapes of Wrath" operation in southern Lebanon.

While the Golan settlers are determined not to compromise in the slightest on Israel's sovereignty over the Golan, they boast that the Golan is a separate place

from Israel. This is because the settlers are unusually tolerant of each other and each other's life styles so today's cultural conflict between religious and secular in Israel "proper" has not infected the Golan.

In earlier years, the Golan was monopolised by settlers belonging to the Labour Party, who might have been prepared for a compromise, but present political affiliations in the area are one-third Labour, one-third the present right-wing coalition led by the Likud, and about one-third religious. This mix favours the hardline policies adopted by the settlers on the Golan.

Needless to say, the Golan, a game reserve and natural park, is a favourite location for tourism, both foreign and domestic, with 1.7 million tourists visiting a year. With typical forward looking optimism, the Golan plans to absorb an additional 1,000 families by the year 2000.

All these facts make unreal the Syrian demand that Israel must totally evacuate the Golan. This area, from which the Israelis expelled 100,000 Syrians — who wish to return home — may never return to Syria unless there is a decisive Arab military victory over Israel — which is a very remote possibility.

The policy is to encourage China to cooperate

By Madeleine K. Albright

WASHINGTON — The annual congressional debate concerning China's trading status has begun. Some argue that we should suspend normal trade relations until Chinese policies on human rights, market access, military exports and other matters change. The administration is convinced that our interests are better served by a frank dialogue with China in which differences are aired and opportunities to establish common ground are explored.

Let me explain why. The future of U.S.-Chinese relations will depend primarily on how China conducts itself as its economy grows and its regional influence expands. Our policy is to encourage China to accept the reality that it will find more security and prosperity if it abides by international rules than if it does not.

Currently, China is productively engaged with the international community in some areas. It helped gain approval of a treaty banning explosive nuclear tests. It is helping to prevent instability on the Korean Peninsula. It has supported peacekeeping operations in Cambodia and elsewhere.

It has accepted in principle, although not yet fully implemented, effective export controls on sensitive technologies. It is actively engaged in discussions to enter the World Trade Organisation (WTO) on commercially acceptable terms.

We would like to see China travel further down the road towards full observation of international norms, particularly those on human rights. But, given the undemocratic nature of its government, we expect that movement to be gradual, and would be disappointed, but not surprised, by setbacks. We are convinced, however, that progress is more likely to result from dialogue than from a quixotic effort to isolate a nation single-handedly. We must recall that one of every five human beings on this earth lives in China.

Those who oppose continuing normal trading relations have legitimate concerns, but the tool they have chosen is less scalpel than wrecking ball. They proceed from the fragile hope that unilaterally imposed trade sanctions would cause China to change both its domestic and its foreign policies.

The administration proceeds from the realistic conviction that revoking China's trade status would derail prospects for U.S.-Chinese cooperation on issues important to America's strategic interests, ranging from dismantling North Korea's nuclear programme to encouraging dialogue between Beijing and Taipei to controlling nuclear proliferation to safeguarding the global environment to cracking down on international terrorism, drugs and crime.

Ending normal trading relations with China would — as democratic leaders in both places attest — severely damage free market economies in Taiwan and especially Hong Kong. The Hong Kong government has estimated that this

step might cut as much as \$30 billion of the territory's trade, eliminate as many as 85,000 jobs and reduce economic growth by half. These losses would weaken Hong Kong just when it most needs to assert its strength and autonomy.

Moreover, China would surely retaliate against U.S. exports, endangering more than 170,000 high-paying American jobs. And higher tariffs on our low-cost Chinese imports would add more than \$500 million to America's shopping bill.

Critics say that disrupting commerce with China is essential to uphold U.S. principles. I believe strongly that our strategic dialogue can both protect American interests and uphold our principles, provided we are honest about our differences on human rights and other issues and provided we use a mix of targeted incentives and sanctions to narrow these differences.

In contrast, elimination of China's normal trade status, rather than advancing human rights and the rule of law, would actually harm those in the society most dedicated to their promotion.

Whatever the debate's outcome, China will be a rising force in Asian and world affairs. History teaches the wisdom of encouraging emerging powers to become part of international arrangements for settling disputes, facilitating shared economic growth and establishing standards of international behaviour.

Domestically, we should not let the differences voiced in the current debate obscure agreement on long-term goals. Whether our particular interest in China is diplomatic, security, commercial or humanitarian, our overriding objective is to encourage in China full respect for the rule of law.

If you are a business person, you will care whether China's legal structure respects individual rights, and whether the political environment is stable.

If you are a military planner, you will want to see China moving ahead with reform because you know

that an open society contributes to peace.

If you are a human rights activist, you will welcome the long-term liberalising effects of expanded commerce, a strong private sector and a broad dialogue between China and the world's democracies.

And if you are secretary of state, you will be determined to move ahead on all fronts, encouraging the full integration of China into the international system.

The writer is U.S. secretary of state. The article above is reprinted from The Washington Post.

LETTERS

'Equal' opportunity

To the Editor:

DIVIDING ONE's time between morning classes and an afternoon part-time job is a recent phenomenon that can be observed among quite a big number of our college students. A quick tour of Amman's new cafés and restaurants can confirm this personal observation.

This phenomenon of studying and working simultaneously seemed quite appealing to me, a student myself, who believes in non-stop creativity, working professionally and scoring ultimately. So I embarked excitedly on the destination of hunting a part-time job.

At my first stop, the answer was: "No vacancies." "No part-timers are allowed here," was the answer at the second stop and "No females are allowed to work here after 4:00 p.m.," the most "interesting" one, at the third.

Being a feminist and a human-right defender, I quickly asked the man in charge for an explanation. He smiled and answered very simply: "From our own personal experience, I discovered that males excel during the afternoon period, better than females." That was the end of my pathetic trip, so I headed back home, thinking of nothing but a major adjustment to my own newly created ideology.

This small incident, that occurred to me a few days ago, led me to the conclusion that in our part of the world, mottoes about women and equality are nothing but deformed, fake slogans that resound empty in conference hall.

I thought I would draw the attention to this sexist employee selection not so befitting the age we live in.

Natasha Tawal,
Amman.

Changing the chador in post-election Iran

By Barry May
Reuter

TEHRAN — Women in the Islamic Republic of Iran sometimes recoil in horror when confronted with the offer of a man's handshake on introduction — a taboo of the revolution if they are not closely related.

Not Pari Mayel-Afshar.

No complaint daughter of the revolution, she offers her hand, introduces herself as Afshar and welcomes male visitors to her office in Tehran.

Forget pictures of women covered head to toe in shapeless black chadors — the image, more than any other, of the Islamic Revolution that toppled the monarchy and ended the Shah's attempt to Westernise Iranian women by forcing them into European costume.

In public Afshar must wear the hejab — a form of Islamic dress comprising a headscarf and long dark coat. But she does so under protest.

"When I put the rubbish out I don't wear hejab, to show I don't approve. But I must wear a headscarf and coat in public, even in my office," she explained.

More freedom than in Afghanistan, S. Arabia

Afshar is far from the image popular abroad of Iranian women oppressed in a male-dominated society. She is a politically-aware company director educated in the West

with an MBA and a tough approach to running her family import business.

She insists on punctuality and will not accept second best from her staff — elements of a work ethic rare in Iran.

Women in Iran work and run businesses, drive, smoke in public and compete for political office — liberties denied in neighbouring Afghanistan under the purist Islamic Taliban militia which takes a harsh view of women's role in society.

Across the Gulf in Saudi Arabia, women may work in limited categories of jobs but cannot drive or smoke in public, and there are no elections.

Recently millions of women used their growing political clout to help elect a moderate Shiite Muslim cleric, Mohammad Khatami, as the Islamic Republic's next president.

Mr. Khatami, who takes over in August, said the government had a clear duty to provide equal opportunities to women.

"First of all people want some breathing space in their private lives," Afshar said.

"I want freedom of private choices, including dress code and what music I listen to. Just get off my back."

New law drops lashes for women

Morality police, known as the Guidance Patrol, arrest women in the street or in cars for violating revolutionary Islamic dress codes by revealing too much hair or wearing

make-up.

The fine for wearing nail varnish, for example, is 80,000 rials (\$26.66), for eyeshadow 40,000 rials.

Even weddings have their price by way of a "fine" if the newlywed couple want their families and friends to celebrate without hindrance from the Guidance Patrol.

The average wedding party brings in 50 million rials, Tehran residents said.

A new law enforced last July dropped punishment of 74 lashes for women breaking the Islamic dress code but set a jail term of up to two months and a fine of up to 500,000 rials. Some women were concerned that conservatives were trying to toughen the dress code by making the veil mandatory, however.

Men in short-sleeve shirts are turned away from government offices in case their bare arms should "excite the sisters" working there.

And women have been physically attacked for cycling in a Tehran park, while some ayatollahs have denounced such female activities as running and horse-riding as sexually provocative.

Behind the high walls of elegant homes in Tehran's affluent northern suburbs, women throw off the hejab to reveal stylish designer dresses, lipstick, mascara and nail-varnish, and to mix freely with men.

"Women want comfort and progress. Everyone wants to have a choice. The hejab perpetuates a negative image of Iranian culture. It's a facade," Afshar said.

Veil still praised

A relaxation of social mores, including less strict dress code, is what many in Iran, especially the young, are hoping will come out of Mr. Khatami's election.

But for every elite woman like Afshar there are scores of less well-educated lower-class women who have always worn the veil as a matter of religiously-correct attire, even in the days of the pro-Western monarchy.

Some women who have gained status as a result of the revolution, like President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani's daughters Fatimeh and Faezeh who are now political figures in their own right, praise the Islamic dress code.

"We feel quite comfortable with the hejab and we consider hejab an element of growth of our society," Faezeh said at a news conference on the eve of the election.

"We Muslim women would like to announce that the hejab has given us confidence and security and allowed us to have a more prominent role in society."

Women like Afshar want more than a mere lifting of the veil, however.

"The election was run on social issues. Unless Mr. Khatami is very successful we're going to have very serious problems. He must somehow give some leniency to people's everyday lives," she said.

"What Khatami brings with him is hope. I am waiting, like everyone else."

Shah's former mistress publishes tell-tale memoirs

By Kianouche Dorrane
Agence France Presse

TEHRAN — A former mistress of the shah has published a kiss-and-tell memoir exposing her tumultuous relationship with the late Iranian monarch during the period between his two first marriages in the 1940s.

In *Until Darkness*, Parvane Ghafari talks about her on-off liaison with the king in the two years between his separation from Fozzieh, the daughter of the former Egyptian King Farouk, in

1946, and his marriage to second wife Soraya in 1948. She portrays Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi as a "stingy, possessive, jealous and lustful" man more preoccupied with sex and lavish parties at his court than the country's affairs.

"Farewell my childhood and virginity," is how the blond former movie star describes her feelings after a first sexual encounter with the young king at his imperial palace at the age of 17.

In uncharacteristic detail she explains how the king,

who died shortly after being toppled in the 1979 Islamic Revolution, "abused and dumped me after satisfying his lust."

"Three times a week, the shah would have me over to spend the night. And each time he would send me back home like a child tucked away his doll in a closet corner after he had finished playing with it," Ghafari wrote.

Although she was often invited to glamorous and extravagant parties at the court, the former mistress

portrayed the shah as a "stingy man" who spent little money on women he dated.

"During our years together, he only gave me a house, several rings and a monthly allowance," she said. "I did not get much out of him." "He merely used me to fill his lonely hours, but it was clear that he didn't intend to marry me. So I began to worry about my future," she went on. Ghafari said at one point she got pregnant by the shah, but when she broke the news "he became

red with rage and slapped and insulted me."

To persuade her to get an abortion, she said, the king "falsely promised to marry me ... I did so and nearly died from the operation."

Later she started dating other men in the court to "ensure my future, but this made the shah extremely jealous. He could not bear seeing me approaching other men." Although the former king was known for his penchant for women, flying and fancy cars, Ghafari said his knowledge

of all of them was "very superficial."

"One day, on the way to a ski resort near Tehran, our car broke down and the shah couldn't even open the hood to look into the engine," she said.

The couple last saw each other in late 1940s at the shah's wedding party to Soraya. "I went there with a dazzling appearance, intending to ignore the shah and make him jealous."

Disillusioned with court life and an ensuing love affair with a Tehran-based

American pilot, Ghafari tried her luck at acting and performed in a dozen commercially successful films in the 1950s and 1960s.

"Now I am a crumpled, old and sick woman awaiting her death. What is there left from the pretty blond except for decay, darkness and roles in a few weak movies?" said the 65-year-old former star.

The publication of her memoirs, much of it written in explicit language, has angered Iranian radicals who argue it has no place in

the conservative Islamic state.

Kar-o-Karghar newspaper voiced surprise last week that the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance had authorised the release of the "unhealthy" sensational book "at a time when many authors are facing problems getting approval."

The ministry, headed by Islamic conservatives, keeps a tight rein on literary and artistic works and has a record of strict censorship.

African stars line up for mega-audience

By Graeme Ewens

PARIS — Millions of fans of African music are in for a feast later this year with the continent's hottest talent performing for a whole evening of live television.

Organisers say they expect an audience of up to 350 million to watch the final judging for the second Kora All-Africa Music Awards, being held in Johannesburg on Sept. 28.

The event is being transmitted live by satellite throughout Africa. It will also be available in several other parts of the world, and the MCM cable network will show the winners' videos daily for a month after the final.

Following a successful debut in 1996, this prestigious event has become the African equivalent of the Western music industry's Grammy Awards. Last year's final attracted an estimated television audience of 73 million in 35 countries.

A lavish reception was

The International popularity of African music is growing, and a live television spectacular featuring a new prestigious awards event is helping to boost the industry's success.

held in Paris in late May to announce the 50 finalists, chosen from more than 230 nominations.

To enter the running, each artist's recording company had to submit a video clip and a CD released during the past 12 months.

The 13 categories range from the best regional artist/bands to the most promising newcomers, best video, best arrangement, best album and best overall artist.

In 1996, Papa Wemba and Youssou N'Dour shared top overall honours, with a special jury prize going to South Africa's Miriam

Makeba. Regional winners included Cheb Mami (North), Bayete (South), Awilo Longomba (Central), Khadja Nin (East) and Meikway (West). Bheki Mseleku (South Africa) was voted best instrumentalist.

Prize money ranges from \$2,000 for regional winners to \$5,000 for the top male and female artists. But the mass exposure is worth much more in terms of potential record sales.

A selection committee of eight journalists, producers and disc jockeys had spent a week deliberating in a Paris hotel, under the chairmanship of Wally Badarou, the

Beninois musician and producer of international hits.

Another panel will judge at the final event, which is being produced by the South African Broadcasting Corporation in association with several French organisations and companies.

In the two months leading up to the final, all the contestants' videos will be televised, enabling viewers to get to know the artists and to pick their own favourites before judgement night.

The inspiration behind the Kora Awards is Ernest Coovi Adjovi, a Francophone West African businessman who moved to Namibia in the late Eighties. In 1989, he helped organise the Namibia National Day celebrations, and later moved to South Africa, where he became involved in music promotion.

He named the awards after the West African Mandinka people's 21-stringed traditional instrument, the Kora, which has made a big impression around the world in recent years.



Music to the ears of industry

- Wholesale sales of albums and singles exceeded \$2.4bn in 1996
- 11 countries account for more than two-thirds of the global market: Belgium, Brazil, Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Portugal, US
- US easily tops the hit parade, with 1996 sales of \$7.9 billion (120m singles, 1.5m LPs, 167m cassettes, 446m CDs). Japan is second with \$5bn

Source: Music and Copyright

Adjovi has brought a welcome degree of professionalism to a business not known for its smooth organisation or integrity. The budget for the Kora event is more than \$1 million. The stage set for the television spectacular alone is costing \$120,000. Income will come from sponsorship, television rights and advertising.

Adjovi's Francophone background ensures that he taps into the wealth of music coming out of the French-speaking countries, although he emphasises that he is not involved in the selection or judging.

Musicians from both Congo, Cameroon and Senegal dominated the entries, with the African diaspora (mostly from the Francophone West Indies) attracting the second-largest number of hopefuls.

Indeed, English-speaking musicians, other than 18 South Africans, were under-

represented in the Kora nominations, which is a reflection of their current position in both record sales and video production.

The South Africans have high production standards and are expected to do well in the overall categories. Two artists each from Nigeria, Ghana and Tanzania were the only other Anglophone entries.

One notable inclusion is the Ghanaian reggae star Koko Antwi, who has been

nominated both in his regional group and as best overall artist.

Antwi was one of the musicians present at the Hotel de Crillon in Paris for the glamorous ceremony to announce the finalists. Appropriately, the inauguration speech was made by the South African ambassador to Paris, Barbara Masekela, sister of renowned trumpeter Hugh Masekela, who is surely due for a special jury prize — Gemini News.

Baby-Sitters Club books draw zealous fans

By Martha Mendoza
The Associated Press

ALBUQUERQUE, New Mexico — Skinny girls. Chubby girls. Giggling girls. Crying girls. At first it just looks like a pre-adolescent mob scene, but then you realise they're all clutching books.

Baby-Sitters Club books. At the centre of all the attention — and too shy to speak to the crowd — is the author, Ann M. Martin.

"If you asked me to speak to a group I would probably melt right to the floor," she says, smiling nervously into a large, foamy cup of cappuccino.

It's hard to believe this mild woman who describes herself as "kind of boring" and who sews in her free time has become a hero among a certain segment of the population.

But with 150 million of her books in print in 19 languages, Martin and her publishers at Scholastic Inc. are undoubtedly a phenomenon, albeit a reluctant one. Huge numbers of 8- to 12-year-old

girls in this country, and many more elsewhere in the world, follow the stories of Martin's baby sitters.

Martin, 41, started writing Baby-Sitters Club books 11 years ago after working as a children's book editor. The series follows seven girls, ages 11 and 13, who work together as baby sitters in the imaginary town of Stonybrook, Connecticut.

The books also constitute one of the most successful series for children ever, according to publishers weekly.

"Are these high-quality children's literature? No. But these are reading materials that a lot of girls are picking up at an age when kids are easily turned off of reading," says Herb Steven, president of the children's division of the American Library Association.

Even Martin, who reads avidly, hopes girls read beyond her series.

In her stories, her characters have classic books assigned in their English classes and keep good

reading material on their bedside tables.

"I usually mention a really good book that I like and I know that the kids will go and buy those and read them, so I can kind of steer them in the direction of other books that I enjoy," says Martin.

And while girls are reading her books, Martin makes sure to give them something worth spending time with.

The characters deal with divorcing parents, the death of a classmate, bullies and unfair teachers as well as light romances, jealousies and silly adventures.

"Girls can enjoy these books for the same reason young women read glamour magazines, which is they can find themselves in the problems," says Dr. Karen Zager, a co-chair of the American Psychologists Association's presidential task force on adolescent girls.

Dr. Zager says girls find relief in the fast answers to familiar problems.

"That quick fix is very appealing," she says.

Similarly popular series these days include R.L. Stine's Goosebumps and Francine Pascal's Sweet Valley University, echoing the Nancy Drew and Hardy Boys adventures of past generations.

Martin says she never intended her books to be fast reads, but Tina Adams-Lyons, 12, of Albuquerque says she gets through one in "an hour or two."

"Some girls whip through these, but I'm a pretty slow reader," Martin says.

On what was a typical book-signing day for the author, Ashton Hawker, 10, stood with her nose in a book, oblivious to the lively crowd around her at page one bookstore in Albuquerque.

A thin girl with a big white ribbon in her hair, Ashton was one of about 600 girls who showed up for the "best friends tour stop. The tour, which aims to hit all 50 states within two years, takes Martin out on the road twice a month.

"These books have a lot of good details," Ashton says. "I like the way the girls all have really different personalities."

Across the room, Martin is surrounded by a fence of books: assistants keep the crowd back, and allow the girls up one at a time.

On average, about 500 girls show up at each book signing.

"Sometimes there's a pretty serious mob scene," says Martin's publicist Betsy Howie.

During a recent sweep of New Mexico and Colorado, Martin hit four bookstores in two days.

Rebekah Garcia, 10, persuaded her parents to drive her 3 1/2 hours to Albuquerque from Durango, Colorado, for a signing. Rebekah has all 109 Baby-Sitters Club books, as well as the series' mysteries and special editions.

"The girls in these books really do seem like they're talking to me," she says. "They don't seem to be as far-fetched as other girl's books."

China launches opium war film in Hong Kong, snubs Patten

By Dominic Lau
Reuter

HONG KONG — China has launched its opium war movie epic in Hong Kong and snubbed last British Governor Chris Patten by excluding him from the guest list.

The blockbuster depicts Britain wresting Hong Kong from the Qing dynasty's empire in a national humiliation set to end when Britain returns the territory at midnight on June 30.

Mr. Patten, the 28th of the British governors that the 19th century Opium War ushered into Hong Kong, was not invited.

Times have changed since a stuffy colonial era's society revolved around the governor, but it is still rare for his name not to head the list of invitees at VIP events.

The top guests at the premiere of The Opium War, screened last Wednesday night, were representatives of the new Hong Kong who take power as he sails away, ending 156 years of British rule.

They include his successor,

future leader Tung Chee-Hwa, the president of the in-coming legislature Rita Fan and the deputy chief of China's Hong Kong mission, Zhang Junsheng.

"We haven't received an invitation," Mr. Patten's spokesman Kerry McGlynn told Reuters. "He has read reports about the movie. But he has not expressed an interest in seeing it."

He added that the governor is a keen movie fan and recently saw The Gate Of Heavenly Peace, a documentary about China's bloody 1989 crackdown against student-led democracy protests.

"If the film on the Opium War is as balanced and as objective, then I'm sure it will have some credibility. If it isn't, if it's seen as something else, Hong Kong people will in their usual wise way make their own judgment," Mr. McGlynn said.

Little love is lost between Mr. Patten and China, or between Mr. Patten and the

post-colonial government-in-waiting.

Beijing and its followers in Hong Kong have blamed Mr. Patten for complicating the handover by introducing democratic reforms in the twilight years of British rule without Beijing's consent.

More than 1,000 guests were invited by the organiser of The Opium War premiere in Hong Kong, Panasia Films, to twin screenings at the Hong Kong Convention Centre.

Officials at Panasia Films said they were too busy to comment about Mr. Patten's absence from the invitation list.

Chinese officials have hailed The Opium War as a major event in China's movie history and a contribution to national efforts to mark Hong Kong's return to Beijing's rule.

Britain seized Hong Kong away from the celestial empire in 1841 in a war over opium trade which China abhorred.

SOCIETY ON THE MOVE will not appear this week: Jennifer Hamarnah is on leave.

Computing with the fair sex

By Jean-Claude Elias

THE EXTRAORDINARY explosion of personal computing in the late eighties generated, literally speaking, a new species of human beings: The computer widows. Understand the women left alone because their partners would rather spend the night conversing with their computer keyboards, mice and monitors. The phenomenon produced, as expected, a long series of jokes, cartoons, anecdotes and other supposedly witty remarks on the unfortunate fate of these women.

Is the situation still the same ten years later? Certainly not. The PC has become a social phenomenon and is not just a technological innovation anymore. In a household it is very likely that all members of a family use the home computer, albeit to a different degree. They may still be a few computer widows in the world but most of them either have become more understanding or have simply decided to "join the circus" and have become computer users themselves. Often, they fight their friend, their husband and their children for PC time-sharing.

Beyond home computing, an impressive number of women have joined the computer profession and compete with men for the best positions the trade has to offer. Indeed, most of the information technology professions require skills that the fair sex is particularly known to have: precision, patience and consistency. Which, of course, does not exclude the IQ level question, but I do not wish to embark on such a controversial topic here.

However we are still far from balance in terms of jobs distribution. An unofficial, quick survey I recently conducted revealed two main aspects of the situation. Most people questioned estimated that the percentage of women



to men for general computer usage (personal and professional) was between 70 and 100 per cent. My own estimate was more conservative, about 50 per cent. Having asked the Jordan Computer Society, they informed me that women constitute only 30 per cent, a little less than a third, of the total number of members officially registered at the Society. The proportion however is slowly but surely increasing in favour of women, they added.

The recent and much publicised forced resignation of a female U.S. Air Force pilot following an extramarital affair brought back the usually very hot discussions on sexism and prejudice against women at work. The computer industry is known for being an "equal opportunity employer," maybe more than any other. If men still care more for PCs than their gentle companions do statistically speaking, it may be just a matter of time — women, the vast majority of them, got interested in information technology later than their fellows. How long before they catch up completely with us? Not too long I would say. What really matters is that the notion of "computer widow" now belongs to the past.

JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, June 19, 1997

3:30	The Holy Koran	7:30	News Headlines
4:35	Soccer Match — Mexico vs. Costa Rica	7:35	Fresh Prince Of Bel-Air
5:00	French Programmes	8:00	Cinema, Cinema, Cinema
7:00	Le Journal	8:30	The Churchills
7:15	French Programme	9:10	Renegade
7:30	News Headlines	10:00	Soccer Match
7:35	Step By Step	12:00	One West Waikiki
8:00	World Echo		
8:30	New Talk Show — The Oprah Winfrey Show		

Monday, June 23, 1997

9:10	Kung Fu — The Legend Continues	3:30	The Holy Koran
10:00	News In English	3:40	Spirou
10:30	Feature Film — Taken Away	4:05	Neighbours
01:05	Soccer Match — Peru vs. Uruguay	4:30	In The Wild (Doc.)
		5:00	Tilt

Friday, June 20, 1997

3:00	Holy Koran	6:10	French Programmes
3:05	Leo The Lion — Cartoon	7:00	Le Journal
3:30	Wish Bone	7:15	French Programme
4:05	Neighbours	7:30	News Headlines
4:30	Winners Down Under	7:35	Murphy Brown
5:15	Varieties	8:00	Discover Magazine
5:30	French Film	8:30	Murder She Wrote
7:00	Le Journal	9:10	Highlander
7:15	French Programme	10:00	News In English
7:30	News Headlines	10:30	The Wright Verdict
7:35	Family Matters	11:15	Homiseid
8:00	The Health Show		
8:30	Hawkeye		
9:10	500 Nations		
10:00	News In English		
10:30	Mini Series		
12:00	NBA		
1:35	Soccer Match — Mexico vs. Colombia		

Saturday, June 21, 1997

3:30	Holy Koran	3:00	Holy Koran
3:35	French Programme	3:35	Soccer Match — Chile vs Ecuador
4:00	Gillete World Sport Special	5:00	Square One
4:30	Innovation	5:10	Album Show
4:50	Tilt	6:10	French Programmes
5:15	Blue Heelers	7:00	Le Journal
6:00	French Programme	7:30	News Headlines
7:00	Le Journal	7:35	Coach
7:15	French Programme	8:00	Tilt 23.5
7:30	News Headlines	8:30	Encounter
7:35	Hanging' with Mr. Cooper	9:10	Nature Of Things (Documentary)
8:00	Magazine Zero One	10:00	News In English
8:30	Prism	10:30	West Beach
9:10	Time Trax	11:15	Drug Wars
10:00	News In English		
10:30	MacGyver		
11:05	Soccer Match		

Wednesday, June 25, 1997

3:30	Holy Koran	3:30	Holy Koran
3:35	French Programme	3:35	Soccer Match
4:05	Global Family	5:30	Border Town
4:30	Energy Express	6:00	French Programmes
4:50	Our World (Doc.)	7:00	Le Journal
5:15	American Chart Show	7:30	News Headlines
6:10	French Programmes	7:35	Grace Under Fire (Doc.)
7:00	Le Journal	8:00	Soldier's Diary
7:15	French Programme	8:30	Challenges
		9:10	Spenser For Hire
		10:00	News In English
		10:25	Land's End
		11:15	American Gothic

Striking news from the little shop of big ideas

By Samer Ghaleb Bagaeen

A DEAR friend of mine, Professor Nighish, had a big idea once. He fed into a mighty computer all those other big ideas that people all over the world had thought of and then instructed the machine to produce whatever results it could come up with.

The outcome was the 1997 edition of the Little Manual For Unsuccessful Big Ideas. A huge illuminating volume of one failed big idea after another.

Of those ideas, our dear professor claims that the following were some of the ones that never did seem to work out:

1. Using fireworks to celebrate those important moments of our lives.
2. Promises of a better future for young people.
3. Clearing out what you think is obsolete, because even what is old and useless can come back to haunt you.
4. Blaming parents for their children's speeding habits, because neither party pays any attention to what everyone else says.
5. Privatisation, because the idea that the average man and woman in Al Nuzha or in Ghor Al Safi owning shares in the privatised telecommunications industry is just an illusion.
6. Electing a party whose slogan was "women are one-half of the society," because in its inaugural meeting hardly 1% of those present were women.
7. Cynicism.
8. Disneyland Amman. Because it already is.
9. Half-a dinar for a trolley at the airport's arrival area.
10. The ex-high ranking official who wanted Picasso to come to Jordan in person to inaugurate a recent art exhibition.
11. Paying more attention to foreigners killed in Jordan than to Jordanians killed in Jordan.
12. Diplomacy: The ability to tell a person to go to hell in



- such a way that he or she looks forward to the trip.
13. Tunnels, more tunnels. ... and more tunnels.
 14. A Hard Rock Cafe built entirely out of hard rocks, rather than colourful steel trusses.
 15. A dreamy playful childhood.
 16. Officials with mobile phones.
 17. Using physical force to restrain pupils in classroom fights.
 18. Reciprocal treatment.
 19. Playing 'Bridge' late into the night.
 20. The Welfare Lottery.
 21. Uqlah, the TV star.
 22. The first Jordanian weather girl.
 23. Purity of the mind.
 24. Believing in the light at the end of the tunnel.
 25. The power of youth.
 26. Abed Rabbo.
 27. Trust.
 28. Teamwork.
 29. Choice.
 30. The right of people to know. More unsuccessful good ideas next week.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

Mohammad A. Shuqair

FACT FILE

• NATURE has provided the pelican with a system created directly over the eye which can transform sea-water from salty to fresh.

• A HAIR in the human body can stand a 6.6-pound pulling power.

• A BIRD quite similar to the sea-gull lays its eggs at the crossing-point of tree branches instead of placing them in a nest.

• IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY, a French noblewoman, following her husband's death, extracted his heart and kept it in a tightly-closed glass box which she used to take wherever she went.

• DURING World War I, a South African ape was granted a military star and was promoted to be a corporal.

• THE MOST EXPENSIVE tuna (fish) was sold by a Japanese fisherman in 1992 in return for \$69,273.

• THE LONGEST fence in the world (9,600 kilometres) was built by Australian shepherds so as to separate the meadows from vast plains. This way they saved their sheep from getting lost.

JOKES

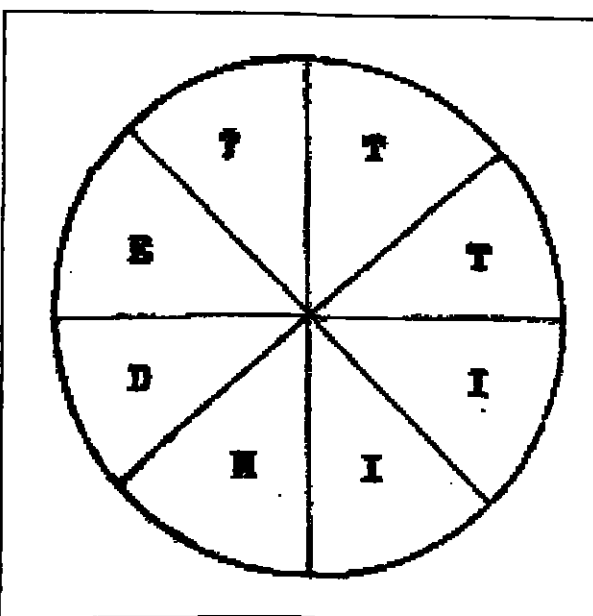
• ONCE Julius Caesar was attending a Roman theatre when he made his famous remarks: "The cast must die."

• AT MIDNIGHT a burglar entered a poor man's house when the latter woke up. Drawing his knife, the burglar said:

"If you move or speak anything, you'll be a dead man in no time. I'm hunting for money. Let me get up and put on a light," said the owner of the house, "and I'll hunt with you."

PUZZLES

(A) INSERT THE MISSING LETTER



BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

1. Name the three principal islands of New Zealand?
2. Do orchids grow from seed?
3. From what animal do we get nutria fur?
4. Was there a real person named Robin Hood?
5. What are the "Vallima Letters"?
6. Why is the passion flower so named?
7. Which aquatic bird does not fly?

RENDEZVOUS WITH ART

Prince Trastamad's Journey to the Forgotten Castle

A play by Jordanian Armenians reinforces traditional creativity, culture of heroism, loyalty and sacrifice

By Mahmoud I. Mufti

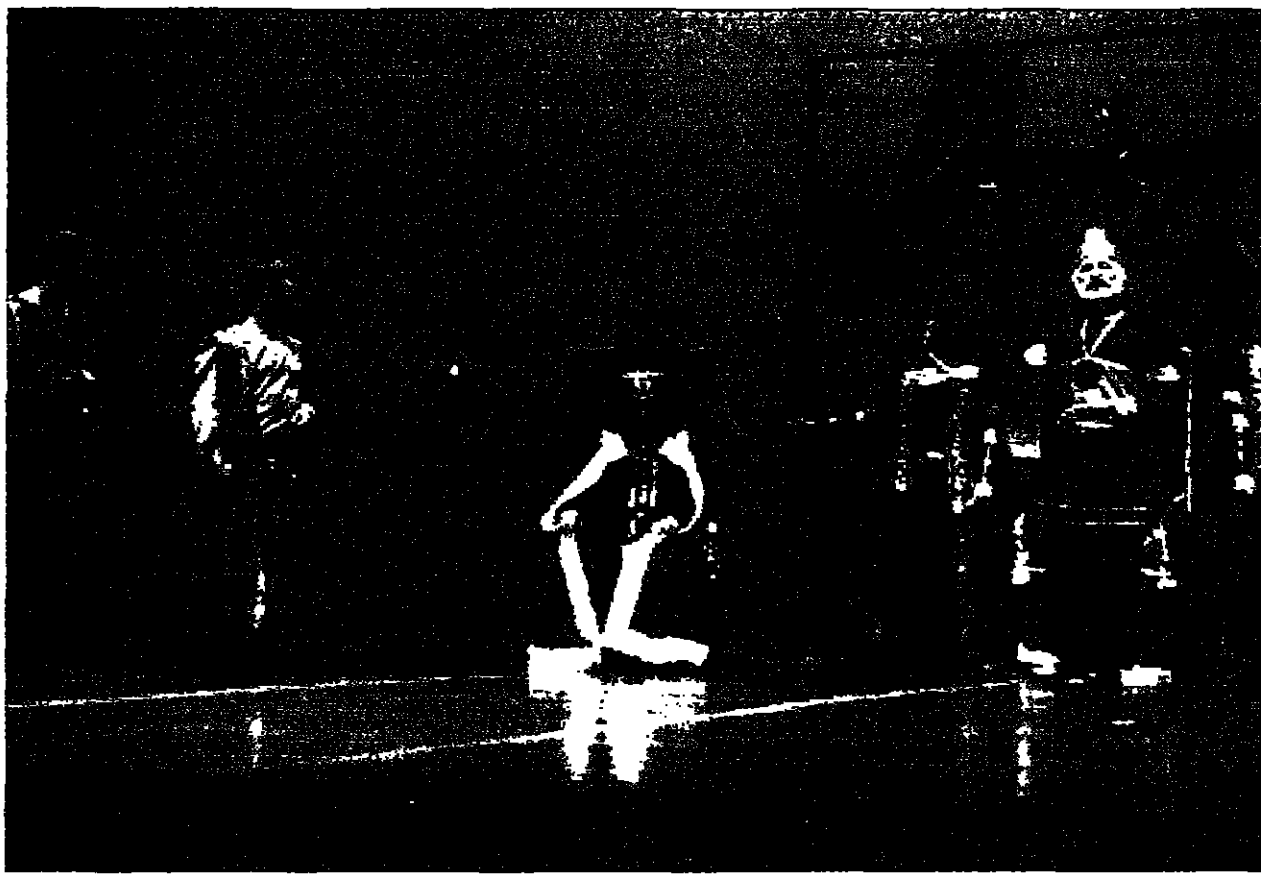
IN HISTORY as well as in this dramatic production, the person of Prince Trastamad characterises the spirit of the diaspora Armenians. Throughout his heroic plight in war, peace, statesmanship, imprisonment, enslavement and freedom — till the moment of his untimely death — he embodied the principles of loyalty. Rather, dual loyalty; to motherland and host country. This is not a predicament or a mindset that is in any way strange or unfamiliar to migrant Armenians. Loyalty to new countries and dominions where, for some reason or other, Armenians have immigrated to, is considered as sacred as loyalty and allegiance to Armenia itself, about whose rich history, cultural heritage and religion young Armenian children are taught wherever they may be.

Growing up, a lot of those children guard romantic and colourful dreams of their first visit to their ancestral land: a land that crystallises and consolidates their notions of hope and destiny, strength and identity, fraternity and camaraderie, sacrifice and heroism... Such a projected visit becomes, to them, almost like a cultural pilgrimage. More accurately, a reconstitution of their very national being. In their new adopted countries around the world, however, they keep that dynamic alive through the reenactment — in their everyday lives — of their cultural practices and values, most important among which is their language. It is through the language that all the subcomponents of their heritage are kept together in a harmonious amalgam; music, dance, poetry, drama, folklore, religion, etc.

The play, six months in the preparation, presented by the Hagop Baronian Theatre Group of the Watani Sporting Club, depicts true historical events dramatised by novelist and playwright, Hrant Nakashian (c. 1984). The events take place in 364 A.D. when, following some 30 months of no-win, no-lose war, King Arshag II accepts — at the behest of his princes and church leaders — an invitation to a peace-bid by the Persian Emperor Shabuh II of the Sassanian Dynasty. The long war had harvested a considerable proportion of the youth in both countries and left both sides exhausted and disillusioned. It moreover cast a cloud of doubt over the legendary near-invincibility of the Persian Empire, for the promise of decisive victory, or any victory, by the Sassanians had been dashed by the greatly outnumbered but valiantly fierce Armenians. The war had been one of territorial disputes and matters of sovereignty, further exacerbated by the difference in religion. The Armenians were relatively new converts to Christianity, having adopted the latter as their state religion 63 years earlier in 301 A.D. (and in fact the first country to have done so, historically). The Persians, by contrast, retained the religion that the Armenians made a departure from, Zoroastrianism.

The play commences with the processional arrival of the Armenian monarch and his delegation of princes and statesmen to the court of Shabuh II. The imposing costumes of the actors, a serious dramatic demeanour and an outstanding chorus make for a very impressive and gripping beginning to the opening scene. The background is kept simple and uncluttered, featuring — in the background of centre-stage — three heavy oversize cast-iron chairs befitting of any royal court. Long flowing beards, flowing velvet cloaks, gold tassels and other regalia adorn the scene at the court. In the interests of peace, the two monarchs attempt a suspension of their mutual distrust and contempt, and appear intent on reconciling their differences and healing the wounds of war. The viewer is left in no doubt as to who is the senior leader among the two. The Armenian king, youthful but dignified and self-assured, appears relatively timid on soil which is clearly not his own, while the ravages of time and experience are more evident on the face and in the demeanour of his host, Shabuh, "King of kings." Deference is delivered accordingly, albeit from one king to another.

The festive mood of the peace-accords is soon overcast by a cloud of mistrust and further antagonism, however, when King Arshag spurns an attempt by Shabuh to wed him to his sister, in what the emperor had envisioned as a marriage crowning their new strategic alliance. Arshag's reasons for declining appear quite reasonable to the viewer; he is already married to the Byzantine emperor's sister, Queen Olympia. As a Christian, he cannot take a second wife, and strategically, he would not want to jeopardise his precarious alliance with the Byzantines by relinquishing his queen. At a personal level, he has no wish for a second wife either. Shabuh dismisses Arshag's cordial reply as mere sophistry engineered to deliver him a rebuff. Affronted, rebuffed and deeply angered, the Persian Emperor eventually regains sight of the larger scheme of affairs, and decides to continue in his conciliatory disposition for the good of the peace. To this end, he arranges for Arshag and his delegation to



Emperor Shabuh welcomes the Armenian King Arshag in the great hall of his palace

embark on a tour to Persia's historic and scenic sites. While the Armenian king is on tour, the high priest and other advisers persuade Emperor Shabuh to put Arshag's loyalty to the peace treaty to the test. A scene at the end of Act I shows Shabuh ordering his servants to bring samples of soil and water from Armenia and to scatter them under the carpet of the great hall of the Royal Court. The test is designed to ascertain whether Arshag's demeanour fluctuates between deferential and defiant as his strides take him from Persian turf to Armenian soil, and hence the supposed yardstick of his loyalty or potential treachery. The acuteness of certain decisive junctures in the play, such as this, are accentuated by shrill or hum-hum releases from the chorus of 26, the Armenagian Choir, collectively operating on four distinct voice-ranges. This is masterfully matched by corresponding and synchronised use of coloured light-effects and smoke-release.

Finally, upon Arshag's return, Shabuh takes him by the hand and walks down the length of the imposing great hall, when, on Persian soil, the Armenian king seems humble and timid while, a mere several yards away, on Armenian soil, he suddenly lashes out and chastises the senior monarch, warning him of his wrath to come, of his planned re-conquest of captured domains and his intended re-establishment of Armenian sovereignty over them. In consequence, Shabuh issues orders for the immediate arrest of Arshag and his exile to nowhere other than the dreaded and forbidden forgotten castle, "Anhoush" (the 'unmentionable'). It was thus named because of stringent orders by Shabuh that any mention of it in his presence would constitute treason, with no clemency for the inevitable verdict of execution.

Act II of the play opens with the imperial bestowal of the highest honour in Persia by Emperor Shabuh unto the Armenian Prince Trastamad. The young prince, enslaved three years earlier along with the royal Armenian entourage at the time of their king's arrest and exile, came to serve as a warrior in the Persian Imperial Forces. In a particular battle, Shabuh's life fell in grave danger and was saved by Trastamad, at which time his loyalty came to be regarded as being beyond question.

Further wishing to honour the prince at the ceremony, Shabuh declares his readiness to grant any wish that Trastamad may make, regardless of its nature. At this point, Trastamad (convincingly played by Aram Bedevian) is visibly torn by his desire to present the wish that he yearns to be granted and the desire not to offend his royal master. With little breathing space, he is prompted by the emperor to state his wish, so he stages a compromise. Trastamad had initially hoped to secure the release of his ailing captured king, Arshag, but realising the inevitable futility of such a measure, he asked Shabuh that he merely allow him to visit him in the Forgotten Castle in order to set him free just for a single day.

The request triggers a crescendo of rage from the emperor, who is astonished by his protégé's audacity. He also feels he has been put in a tight spot, where he may appear hypocritical and credulous in front of his court officials if he fails to apply the death sentence on Trastamad (for having uttered "Unhoush, the unmentionable"). Prevented from doing so by the fact that he owes his life to the young prince, coupled with his secret admiration for the prince's loyalty to his original sovereign, Shabuh spares his life and grants him his blessing for his expedition under the protective escort of a joint Persian-Armenian entourage.

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tive dancing and merry-making (courtesy of the Watani Sporting Club's Spitak Dance Troupe). At this juncture, the viewer is scintillated by the intricate footwork and ruggedness of the dancing, wishing that there might have been plenty more. The combination of dancing and costumes is nothing short of stunning!

Thinking that he has finally been set free, King Arshag starts dreaming of his return to Armenia. But as the sun sets, he is informed that his freedom is in fact just for that single day. He is devastated. Preferring a swift clean death over an eternity of servitude, he commands his prince to kill him. Trastamad wouldn't hear of it initially, but the king implores him to carry out his order before his final moments of freedom are over, so he could die in dignity as a free king. With a mixture of reluctance, resignation and conviction, the prince grants his king his final wish. Delirious with grief, Trastamad's heart succumbs to a seizure, whence he collapses lifeless next to his sovereign.

The impact of the double tragedy is felt in the audience, manifesting itself in sighs, tears and other reverberations of the soul. It has been said in the context of Shakespeare's King Lear that "tragedy identifies a principle of good that is coexistent with evil... Audiences have tended to expect a purgation of the tragic emotions of pity and fear, a restoration of the moral order, and a reaffirmation of the dignity of man; for so many. The Tragedy of King Lear (and, by analogy, that of King Arshag and Prince Trastamad) does not fulfil their optimistic expectations. It is the resolution of the action which has been and is the root of the difficulty." For good measure and consolation for royal dignity, both king and prince were nonetheless buried in Armenian soil expressly brought in to Persia from their homeland by their compatriots, and placed in their burial crypts.

The emphasis on the "soil" is referred to and emphasised several times in the play, in what is significant to note that the notion of national and personal honour is integrally linked to home-turf. By some accounts, it is every Armenian's treasure, redemption and hope; the soil, the land. No doubt, this strong sense of nationalism is rendered more acute by past and present predicaments of the Armenian people, their diaspora and the events of 1915, when many of them were decimated in a genocidal holocaust. Yet armed with a richness of cultural heritage and entrenched national principles that only a four-thousand-year history can instill and nurture in a people, they draw their strength and collective identity. They are simultaneously possessed of an almost unique pragmatism and secu-

larly in-identity that allows them to function as fully integrated and assimilated members of their host societies, drawing the respect and admiration of indigenous local populations for their integrity, honour, dignity and work ethic.

For numerous generations following his death — and till the present day — King Arshag II is regarded as a symbol of Armenian nationalism, as demonstrated in his unyielding attachment to the homeland. Prince Trastamad, in turn, portrays the strong attachment of the diasporan Armenians to their homeland, on the one hand, and their staunch loyalty to their newly adopted or host countries, on the other. This is the relevance of this much-loved Armenian epic (based on real-life historical events) to contemporary Armenian society in Armenia itself and the diaspora. The play, if correctly viewed in its broader meaning and implications, can be seen to chronicle the patterns of thought of Armenians in relation to the notions of chivalry, courage, sacrifice and heroism.

The play took place on two consecutive evenings at the Royal Cultural Centre on June 4 and 5, and is likely to be performed again in Amman in December. Below is a rundown of the cast: Emperor Shabuh II of Persia (Ara Voskian), King Arshag II of Armenia (Hagop Hagopian), Prince Trastamad of Armenia (Aram Bedevian), Antigone... Head of the Special Forces (Burkev Balekian), Sanassan... Chief of Protocol at the Persian Imperial Court (Sevan Sarkissian), Sharkeer... Head of the Persian Royal Court (Hagop Mouradian), Dancing girls (Maral Yessayan and Serpouhie Jeenoyan), Tenshabouh... Persian High Priest (Harout Melkonian), Head of the fortune-tellers (Ara Krikorian), Messenger (Johnny Yaghelian), Armenian Princes (Avo Yaghelian, Kevork Bulekian, Sheeraz Hagopian, Avo Jingeozian), Jail-keeper (Vahan Panossian), Throne-guard (Raffi Boyajian and Sevan Bedevian), Sorceress/Fortune-teller (Silvia Sarkissian Hairabedian), Vasag Mamigonian (Avo Yaghelian), Costumes, accessories and decor (Carole Ketchedian and Bushra Hajo), Make-up (Bushra Hajo), Director (Silvia Sarkissian Hairabedian).

No less significant in this truly marvellous dramatic production are the members of the Armenagian Choir, whose large number of 26 has translated into an inability to list them here individually by name.

For those who missed the play and feel compelled to see it following the 'insights' presented here, please inquire with Director Silvia Hairabedian about tickets for the December performances (at Fax: 670298).



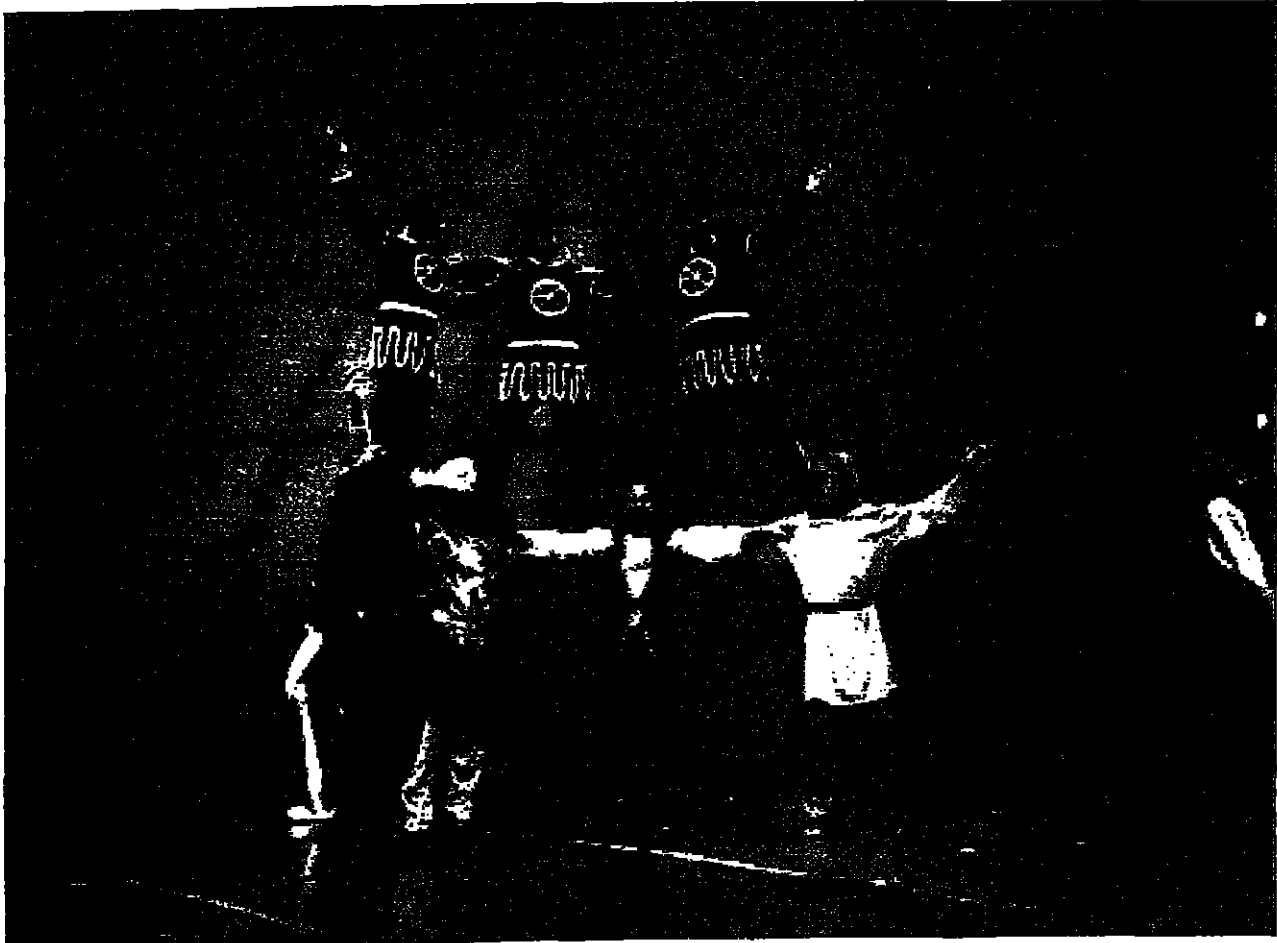
Prince Trastamad and his escorts listen to the fortune-teller on their way to the Forgotten Castle

then re-illuminate the stage, the scene has changed; a heavy black curtain forms the background of night. We next see the beleaguered but resolute prince drugging his way with his aides. The whole atmosphere suddenly becomes a blend of classical and surrealistic choreographic innuendoes with the abrupt appearance of a young woman (Maral Yessayan) dancing in ballet-form to an excerpt from Romeo and Juliet. Night turns into day, and day into night. Technically, this is accomplished by the portrayal of Trastamad squinting uncomfortably up at the sun. This, with the music, dancing and almost genuine fatigue of the performers in that scene (for the play is nearing its conclusion at this stage) is one of the most atmospheric moments one is likely to capture in the play.

The dancing, representing hope and inspiration in the face of the perils and arduousness of travel, couldn't have been better choreographed to create that precise effect. The nimbleness, daintiness and sheer sublime grace of the dancer, clad in ivory silk, imbues a great deal of the "professional touch" to the overall production. But almost true to the inescapable conclusion that the moment couldn't last, the blended atmosphere of serenity and severity is thereafter thrown under; a fortune-teller (Silvia Hairabedian, also the play's director) enters the scene in a whiff of macabre smoke, not much unlike that depicted in the advent of the wicked Witch of the East to Munchkin Land (in the Wizard of Oz).

Chaos reigns supreme as the fortune-teller proceeds to entrance the weary travellers and destroy innocence personified by means of a barrage of spells: the beautiful ballerina is struck down. So vile is the demeanour of the sorceress-come-fortune-teller, one instantly recalls the three witches in Macbeth as they told him that "no man of woman-born" could ever subdue him. Instead, the fortune-teller told Trastamad that he would most assuredly be annihilated if he continued in his journey to the castle. She warned of carnage, but little did the prince heed her words. She then resigned herself to the inexorability of such an outcome, for "what is written to happen will happen" in any event. And in another puff of smoke, she vanishes.

Act III opens with King Arshag in the main hall of the prison-castle, where a splendid banquet is prepared by Prince Trastamad in his honour. Also present are the Armenian and Persian escorts of the prince, all of whom attempt to lighten King Arshag's heavy and despairing heart. Even the stone-hearted jailer finds himself caught up in the high spirits of the day. The scene that follows is one of fes-



Prince Trastamad and the Armenian and Persian escorts entertain the Armenian king in Act III

Sting therapy makes bee-lievers out of arthritis sufferers

By Holly Ramer
The Associated Press

YARMOUTH, Maine — Feeling bad? Take a sting. Pluck a honeybee from a jar, hold it to your skin, and let it sink its stinger into your flesh. First it stings like Hades. Then it itches. Then comes soothing relief from pain.

Those are the three stages of apitherapy, according to bee-lievers.

Undaunted by warnings that the procedure is medically unproven — possibly even dangerous — thousands of arthritis sufferers, multiple sclerosis (MS) patients and others rely on apitherapy for relief.

While some physicians share their enthusiasm, many say science doesn't support the cure-all claims.

Beekeeper Stanford Brown of Yarmouth is one of the believers. He was tired of taking up to 100 Aspirin a week for his rheumatoid arthritis, so he put his bees to work.

"I'd get spasms so bad they'd twist me right up," he says. "I couldn't run or play with my kids. Many times, I'd be trying to get out of bed and I'd have to slide out onto the floor. I'd be so stiff."

Brown, 77, began his bee venom therapy about 25 years ago. Since then, he's stung himself about three times a week, depending on the severity of his symptoms.

Proponents of the technique say it works by reducing inflammation and boosting the body's immune system. MS patients say it promotes nerve transmissions. Bee venom is also believed to stimulate the production of cortisone, says

Dr. Theodore Cherbuliez of Scarsdale, New York, a psychiatrist and president of the American Apitherapy Society. Bees can be placed at the specific trouble spots or along the spine to distribute venom to various parts of the body, Dr. Cherbuliez says.

Dr. Cherbuliez, who guides people interested in bee sting therapy, says he has seen improvements in people afflicted with arthritis, multiple sclerosis, depression, chronic fatigue, shingles, skin tumors, premenstrual syndrome and other problems.

According to the Ohio-based Apitherapy Society, more than 3,000 physicians practice the technique in North America. The group has collected information from more than 10,000 people worldwide who claim to benefit from the bee venom.

Dr. Cherbuliez makes no promises that the venom will be effective.

"Some people ask me, am I worried that I will get into trouble with the law?" he says. "I spend no time worrying about it. I'm not doing anything illegal. I'm not saying it is an approved method."

But many physicians worry that patients may be recklessly embracing an unproven technique.

"People who are tempted to consider bee stings should be working with their physicians to explore other appropriate treatments," says Dr. Doyt Conn, vice president of medical affairs at the Arthritis Foundation in Atlanta. "Not only is this bee sting therapy unproven, but potentially dangerous."

In addition to treating himself, Brown also shares some of the more than 5 million bees he keeps in his back yard.

With his bee-sting kit close by, he first does a "test sting" to make sure people aren't allergic. He sends them home with a jar of bees, a piece of honeycomb and a bit of paper towel roll, because the bees like the darkness inside the tube.

Brown doesn't keep track but estimates he's helped hundreds of people. One woman gets 30 stings every other day for her MS.

Such stories trouble Patricia O'Looney, director of research and medical programmes at the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, which is funding a study that involves injecting laboratory animals with purified bee venom.

"The difficulty with any of these reports is that they're anecdotal," Dr. O'Looney says. "The individuals or physicians who claim there's a benefit haven't followed up with the proper scientific studies."

No two cases of MS are alike, she says, and sometimes symptoms come and go for no apparent reason. "With MS, the disease is so complex and varied that one cannot conclude that the fact that someone gets bee stings and then feels better necessarily means it's because of the stings," she says.

Back in Stanford Brown's kitchen, half a dozen bees bop against the sides of a small jar. He grasps one with a long pair of tweezers and holds it against the top of his hand. When he discards the bee, the stinger stands upright, pulsating as the venom sack makes its way into his flesh.

The stings don't bother him a bit, he says, but this is also a man who once let (1.8 kilograms) of bees crawl on his face for a "bee beard" contest. ("It was fun. It tickled.")

A patch of skin on Brown's hand reddens and swells. Itching sets in, but, "it doesn't bother me half as much as mosquito bites," he says.

The Apitherapy Society doesn't treat patients or make referrals but acts as a clearing house for information about apitherapy.

"Someday someone is going to research this in an organized way with replicated studies," says entomologist Austin Haws, who is not a member of the society but tries to keep up on the latest apitherapy information.

Twelve years ago, Prof. Haws was studying bees in the jungles of Ecuador — and suffering from a severe attack of hay fever — when a fellow researcher convinced him to "take a sting."

Today, the retired Utah State University biology professor continues to use bee venom to treat his hay fever and arthritis.

The Multiple Sclerosis Association of America announced in May it also will finance a bee venom study. The Georgetown University study will begin with researching the properties of bee venom extract, followed by national clinical trials if the first phase of research appears promising, says spokesman Peter Damiri.

"In the past few years, we've seen a huge trend in people trying to take the management of their symptoms into their own hands," Mr. Damiri says. "We are not endorsing or recommending that anyone do this. We are simply saying it's out there and needs to be investigated."

Bionic ears bring hearing to deaf

CHAPLAIN HILL, North Carolina (AP) — Bionic bodies, once the subject of science fiction novels and popular television programmes, are slowly becoming reality at University of North Carolina (UNC) hospitals.

When Michael Wilson was suddenly deafened by Lyme disease, no hearing aid could help. The 43-year-old slipped into depression and stayed in bed.

Cary Pegues had never heard her now 4-year-old grandson speak. The grandmother, who slowly lost her hearing over a decade, couldn't sing with her church choir.

She, too, gradually withdrew into a silent world.

But Mr. Wilson and Mrs. Pegues are among the growing number of people for whom bionics have made hearing possible.

At UNC hospitals, more and more hearing-impaired patients are finding they can experience sound again with internal implants, or bionic ears. While the technology isn't new, the

implants are. The most modern implant has three channels or computer programmes for processing sound in three different ways. Older devices had only one channel.

The older implants were like albums, while the new ones are more like compact discs, Carol Gilmer, a UNC clinical audiologist, told the Herald-Sun of Durham.

The implants work for people who have the mental tools for hearing but have damaged ears.

UNC doctors, who have performed implant surgery on more than 100 hearing impaired patients, only have implanted two of the new multi-channel devices.

The three channels allow for three different computer programmes to be tailored for different situations — from eating a bowl of ice cream to listening to a symphony.

Mrs. Wilson calls one channel his baseball game programme and another his ice cream bowl programme — the metal spoon clanking on the bowl drove him

crazy — and the third channel is his everyday programme," Dr. Gilmer said.

Even though Mr. Wilson was deaf, his brain remembered how to hear. His brain had "auditory memory," Dr. Gilmer said, but the tools inside his ear didn't work anymore. The implant gave him new tools.

Some patients need time to work into and learn the new hearing system. Others learn almost immediately. Mr. Wilson was talking on the phone the same day doctors switched on the battery-operated implant.

"It's not the same, you just have to get used to what the noises are. Right now, my wife sounds the same as before I went deaf. I can tell whether it's a male or female voice or a child," Mr. Wilson said in a telephone interview.

The oblong implant is sunk into the skull just behind the top of the ear. A thin, snake-like electrode is threaded into the ear canal

and the seashell-shaped inner ear.

The implant is connected to a portable, pocket radio of sorts equipped with a microphone to pick up noise from the outside world. The sound travels through a microprocessor and is translated into impulses, which are sent through a magnet attached to the implant just beneath the skin.

The impulses travel through the electrode and into the inner ear, where the auditory nerve is stimulated by the electrode. The brain processes that stimulation as hearing.

The recipients revel in what many describe as a rebirth.

The same day as the implant surgery, Mr. Wilson called his youngest son, who used to be embarrassed by his father's excessive loudness. He could hear his son's voice over the phone.

"Tears just rolled all over the place," Mr. Wilson said.

If people take organs from animals, will dangerous germs come, too?

By Malcolm Ritter
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — In 1993, an official with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) called a few employees into her office. Then she asked a question at least one of those employees viewed as silly: What was the CDC doing about the risk that animal-to-human transplants would introduce new germs into the human population, infecting first the transplant recipient and then spreading to other people?

"My first reaction was — nothing," recalled Louisa Chapman, an expert on animal viruses that infect humans. "Why should we waste taxpayer time and money on something that was so rare and recipients lived so briefly that it didn't seem a threat to public health." Dr. Chapman thought.

But as she looked into the situation, she changed her mind: Interest in such "xenotransplants" was heating up. Animals could not only ease the shortage of kidneys, hearts and livers for transplantation, but also supply brain tissue for treating diseases like Parkinson's and pancreatic tissue to treat diabetes.

These days, Dr. Chapman spends most of her time on xenotransplantation issues. She's not alone. Drug and biotech companies have poured more than \$100 million into xenotransplant research. Scientists report progress in overcoming rejection of animal organs, and industry analysts expect a new round of organ experiments in people within three to five years.

The heavy betting nowadays is on organs and tissue from pigs, rather than chimps and baboons as in the past.

But the concern Dr. Chapman heard in that 1993 meeting has not gone away: Would xenotransplants be a form of Trojan horse, giving new germs a sneaky entree into the human population?

In March, scientists at the Institute of Cancer Research in London reported that a virus — one that might be found even in healthy pigs — sprang out of pig tissue and infected human cells in a lab experiment. Then it reemerged from human cells in a form that apparently would slip by the body's defences.

That shows the idea of such infection in a pig-to-human transplant "is more plausible than a fanciful scare story," the researchers said.

Two months earlier, the British government had slapped a moratorium on xenotransplants, chiefly because too little is known about the risk of infection.

And federal regulators in the United States now are refining draft guidelines to minimise the risk to public health. The guidelines discuss such things as keeping specialised colonies or herds of animals and screening them for germs.

People who get animal organs, cells or tissue should be followed for life for any sign of animal germs, and they should tell their "close contacts" about the possibility such germs could be passed on, the guidelines say.

Close contacts could include sexual partners, health care workers and breast-feeding children, Dr. Chapman said. "We're not talking about people who sit on the school bus with you or work in your

office," she said.

At this point, the concern over public health is theoretical — a pile of what-ifs, a mound of maybes. It remains Dr. Chapman of how NASA quarantined the astronauts from the first three moon-landing missions in case they brought back weird germs.

"What we are saying is there's some level of risk," she said. The task now, she said, is to figure out how big it is and what to do about it.

Here's why Dr. Chapman and others say there's reason to worry:

— Animals do have germs that can infect people and then spread person-to-person. The AIDS virus apparently came from monkeys long ago, for example, and the flu virus that killed more than 20 million people worldwide in 1918-19 emerged from pigs.

— Dangerous germs can hide in healthy-looking animals. Hantavirus doesn't bother mice, but when it spreads to people, it can kill.

— People getting animal organs would be on drugs to suppress their immune systems, which could make it easier for an animal virus to gain a foothold.

— Genes from an animal virus could mingle with those of a human virus in an organ recipient, creating a hybrid virus with unpredictable behavior.

— Keeping animals isolated from infection may not be enough. Some viruses scientists are concerned about aren't caught, they're inherited.

They're just part of being a pig, for example. That's because eons ago, these viruses infected the ancestors of modern pigs and planted their DNA in sperm and egg

cells. As a result, the virus genes mingled with the pig genes and are now passed on through the generations. It was just this kind of inherited virus that popped up in the pig cell study reported in March.

So far, however, the limited experience with xenotransplants is encouraging.

Dr. Alan Dimick, who's put pigskin on severe burns since 1970, says there's no evidence treatment has infected anybody with pig germs. But Dr. Dimick, director of the Burn Centre at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, notes that pigskin stays on for only a day or two. An implanted organ might pose more of a risk, he said.

Dr. James M. Schumacher, a Sarasota, Florida, neurosurgeon who has put fetal pig tissue into the brains of a dozen people with Parkinson's or Huntington's disease over the past two years, also reports no sign of infection.

"We are extremely overzealous about studying these effects and looking for viruses in the long and short run, and we haven't to date found any problem," he said.

While scientists ponder the risk of xenotransplantation, thousands of people die each year because they can't get a human organ.

"It's a difficult issue," said virus expert Jonathan Allan of the Southwest Foundation for Biomedical Research in San Antonio.

"Here are people dying," Dr. Allan said. "You want to do everything possible to prevent that sort of suffering. But you certainly don't want to foster new infectious disease that would make even greater suffering in the population."

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

NUMEROLOGY

By Alan Olshewsky

ACROSS

- 1 Motley
- 5 1980 Nobelist in literature
- 10 Puff or boreal
- 13 Reptile's cousin
- 17 Actor Dalton
- 19 Basketballer
- 20 Middle East
- 22 Musical note
- 23 Refractive index
- 24 Count on
- 25 Who men from the East
- 26 Flycatcher
- 27 Cuddly bearing
- 28 Actor or Puma
- 29 Reptile's cousin
- 30 J.P.
- 31 Original position
- 34 Sole

DOWN

- 1 Goldie of films
- 2 J.P.
- 3 Remained
- 4 Dinosaur
- 5 With laughter
- 6 Under the weather
- 7 Ball of thread
- 8 Asian capital
- 9 Fragrant
- 10 Musical land
- 11 Musical job
- 12 Musical job
- 13 Barked the (verb)
- 14 Kind of sound
- 15 Famous
- 16 Flow out
- 17 Beauty and
- 18 Burial
- 21 German city

Diagramless, 21x21
By Roger Coburn

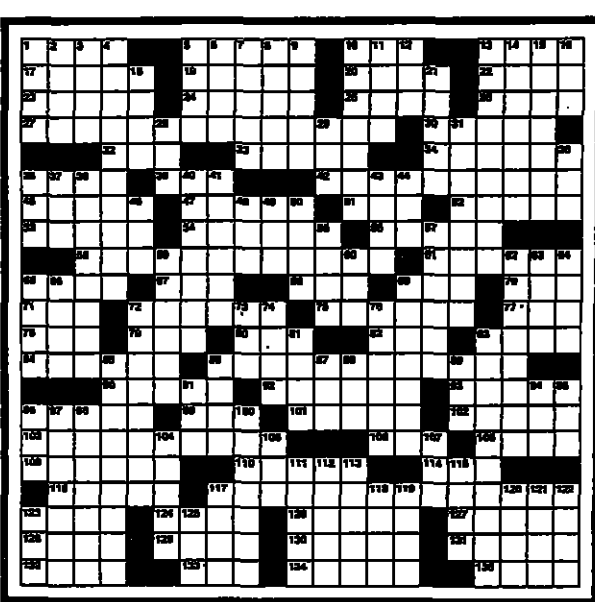
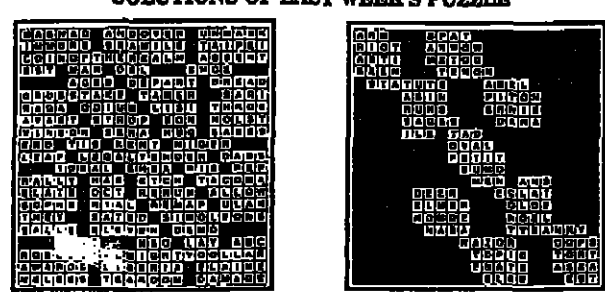
ACROSS

- 1 Cloned of rodents
- 2 War
- 3 Llama — (noun)
- 4 Meme
- 5 French
- 6 Flamingo
- 7 Control
- 8 Spanish composer
- 9 Argon or
- 10 Argon or
- 11 Argon or
- 12 "The Sound of —"

DOWN

- 1 Displace from a position
- 2 Game machines
- 3 Dazzling light
- 4 Taste
- 5 Musical
- 6 Musical
- 7 Musical
- 8 Musical
- 9 Musical
- 10 Musical
- 11 Musical
- 12 Musical

SOLUTIONS OF LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE



1. Road map will tell a man how to get where he's going, not how to fold it up after he's through.

2. Court lays harsh punishment on wealthy slumlord. Orders him to live in his own decrepit development.

3. World last place award in tooth brushing contest beget a unique plaque?

4. Friend gives view of home often wrong but never in doubt.

CRYPTOGRAMS

1. APPLSV MJDQCM TDFW MJJS TQDA JB
XPLV AWJAPV JX H TQXK MUDQ JB ORVY
QJXKXPL FCPWC. — By Earl Ireland

2. TAKE CAKE BAKERTS BAKE ORR TAKE
ELMWO LIE CANTOM WALK NOTI MAKE
KRIKYS HANKE CY CEMYS WARE. — By Duane H. McGoy

3. RELAREMSA OLDE EGMNN RAO IT EGUEJR
MR PMGD TUVZ, TURRAJ OD FLINGNAR
IBTLNREAJ RBAUZYR. — By Barbara A. Buzz

4. GAMONT, LONECULT EF DAVUFG LUFFIS CO
CNUYOR IF DOMOREST. — K.C. Doyle

Fruit fly pheromones give clues to sex appeal

By Deborah Zabarenko
Reuters

WASHINGTON — The nature of sexual attraction — homosexual as well as heterosexual — is far more complex than previously believed, even in such simple creatures as fruit flies, scientists report.

"The complex nature of sexual identity in an animal as relatively simple as the fruit fly indicates that simplistic explanations of the genetic bases of sexuality are unlikely to be true," researchers wrote in an article to be published in latest edition of the journal Science.

By manipulating fruit fly pheromones, the chemical signals that elicit sexual responses, researchers found that male flies who got feminine pheromones drew attention from other males. However, these so-called "perfumed" male flies did not necessarily return the homosexual attention, according to Jean-Francois Ferveur of the Université Paris-Sud at Orsay, France, one of the article's authors.

"The feminised male is still able to show a heterosexual orientation: he is not confused or autostimulated by his own feminine perfume," Dr. Ferveur told Reuters via E-mail.

In fruit flies, homosexual attraction can occur if only one

male has feminised pheromones, which send out a "come hither" signal inviting male courtship. Dr. Ferveur and his co-authors found.

Building on an earlier study that feminised male fruit flies' neurons, these findings show that there are at least two ways to genetically induce homosexual behaviour. Dr. Ferveur said: "Either by feminising the brain of the courter, or the pheromones of the courted."

However, he said that there was no direct relation between these two observations, suggesting that "the very simplistic and reductionist explanation concerning the genetics or sexuality are wrong."

Even in insects, research has shown that there are various levels determining sexual orientation. For humans, whose sex appeal is also governed in part by pheromones, the answer is likely to be still more complex and difficult to pinpoint, Dr. Ferveur said.

"... (T)here are many more determinants that build the sexual orientation of humans," he said. Other variables besides pheromones could include whether human sexual orientation remains constant during life. Other factors might take in societal and historical influences, Dr. Ferveur said.

ANSWERS

PUZZLES

(A) INSERT THE MISSING LETTER

— E. (The letters, read clockwise, spell "time" and "tide," when read alternately).

(B) Venus.

(The boys' names are Robert, Benedict, and William).

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

1. North, South and Stewart Islands.
2. Yes, from seeds so small that it takes thirty thousand to weigh as much as a grain of wheat.
3. The nutria or coypu.
4. No, there is no proof that such a person ever existed.
5. Letters written by Robert Louis Stevenson from his home in Samoa.
6. Because of the supposed resemblance of the corona to the Crown of Thorns.
7. Penguin.

Meridor resigns...

(Continued from page 1)

decision to support Bank of Israel Governor Jacob Frenkel in widening the trading band for the Israeli shekel from a 14 per cent range to 30 per cent — despite Mr. Meridor's objections.

The trading band is the upper and lower limit on the shekel's value in trade against other currencies.

Mr. Meridor feared Mr. Frenkel's plan would lead to a strengthening of the shekel against the dollar, making Israeli exports more expensive. In the long run, Mr. Meridor expected greater unemployment.

Mr. Meridor said Wednesday that Mr. Netanyahu had engineered the showdown over the trading band as a pretext to force him out.

"When you see that there is a method to the madness, as in Shakespeare, you know things have to come to an end," he

said.

Mr. Netanyahu's economic plan was approved in a hastily called cabinet session that started Tuesday evening and lasted through most of the night. The ministers voted 8-3 in favour of widening the trading band, with three abstentions. Five ministers were absent.

"Isn't it strange that in the middle of the week, they call an urgent, unscheduled cabinet meeting to discuss what?" Mr. Meridor said. "Not war, heaven forbid, or a peace agreement, but the issue of the trading band which the prime minister has suddenly shown great interest in and he suddenly wants to set the range."

Mr. Meridor is the second Likud minister to resign since Mr. Netanyahu formed his government exactly a year ago. The first was Science Minister Benjamin Begin, who stepped down after the government approved a partial

Israeli troop pullback from Hebron.

Mr. Meridor and Mr. Begin, descendants of established right-wing families, were known as the "princes" in Likud, and were seen as Mr. Netanyahu's most serious political rivals.

A leading candidate to replace Mr. Meridor was Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon, a former general who engineered Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon.

Mr. Netanyahu said he regretted Mr. Meridor's decision to resign and hoped the finance minister would withdraw his resignation before it took effect Thursday night. Mr. Netanyahu also said he had done his best to find a compromise between Mr. Frenkel and Mr. Meridor.

The new economic plan will allow Israeli companies and banks to invest more freely in foreign stock markets and Israeli citizens to keep assets abroad and take more foreign currency when they leave the country.

Turkish premier resigns paving way for Ciller to lead coalition

(Continued from page 1)

and was a brilliant student. Even in his days at Istanbul Technical University,

where he rubbed shoulders with his future political rivals such as Turkey's current President Suleiman Demirel, Mr. Erbakan was an ardent campaigner for Islam.

In 1948, Mr. Erbakan earned a degree in mechanical engineering and pursued an academic career that led him to a year at the Technical University of Aachen, northwest Germany, in 1951-52. He later worked in Deutz factories on projects for the German army.

Back in Turkey, Mr. Erbakan entered politics in 1969. Rejected by the Justice Party — the predecessor of Ms. Ciller's True

Path Party — he created the Islamist Islamic National Order Party, which was banned in 1971.

Mr. Erbakan subsequently founded the Islamist National Salvation Party in 1972. The following year, with 12 per cent of the vote, that party won 38 seats in the lower house of parliament and three in the upper house.

He was then made deputy prime minister in three coalition governments in the 1970s marked by Turkey's occupation of northern Cyprus and a bloody war between left-wing radicals and extreme nationalists, which had caused the deaths of nearly 10,000 people and prompted a military coup.

Crown Prince, Clinton discuss stalled peace, furthering bilateral relations

(Continued from page 1)

relations and military assistance to Jordan.

Earlier, Prince Hassan met several members of the appropriation committee in the U.S. Congress, both Republicans and Democrats, who expressed their country's determination to provide Jordan with additional economic aid to support its role in the peace process and enhance stability in the region.

Prince Hassan discussed with the congressmen the recent resolution by the U.S. House of Representatives that considered Jerusalem as the united capital of Israel. The Crown Prince stressed that this was a wrong decision in its timing and in principle, saying that it came at a time when the peace process is at a deadlock.

Prince Hassan also met with U.S. congressmen of Arab origin and discussed with them the role they can play in support of Arab causes.

Later Prince Hassan met Arab ambas-

sadors to the United States in the presence of Foreign Minister Fayez Tarawneh and discussed U.S.-Arab relations and Washington's role in the peace process.

Prince Hassan met correspondents of Arab media services in Washington and briefed them on the outcome of his talks with the U.S. administration and his visit to Turkey.

He also discussed Jordan's principled stand on the peace process, the Jewish settlement programme and efforts to develop the Jordan Rift Valley.

Prince Hassan will meet Thursday with United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan with whom he will discuss issues of concern to both Jordan and the U.N., as well as the latest developments in the region.

Deputy Prime Minister for Development Affairs and Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs Jawad Anani and Foreign Minister Fayez Tarawneh will accompany the Crown Prince.

Police capture killer...

(Continued from page 1)

dispute with the victim."

Brig. Gen. Ensour said "the suspect informed police that he owed the victim's father seven million Syrian lira (approximately JD116,000) and that he had to sell his house in Syria, which he claimed was worth 14 million Lira (JD232,000), for nine million (JD150,000) to pay the victim's father."

Brig. Gen. Ensour said the suspect, who arrived in the Kingdom with his wife on March 1, met with the victim who owned a factory in Sahab.

"Mr. Jasi started plotting to kill the couple and to kidnap their child to ask for ransom from the victim's father in order to regain his losses through the sale of the house."

On Monday evening, Brig. Gen. Ensour said, the suspect put sleeping pills in a bottle of juice and offered it to the slain family. After the wife and son drank the juice and went to sleep, the suspect went to the kitchen and grabbed a kitchen knife, struck Jamal (Majdoub) in the stomach.

He stabbed him several more times, went to the wife's bedroom, tied her up with tape, and stabbed her to death, Brig. Gen. Ensour said.

Brig. Gen. Ensour said the suspect abducted the child and left the apartment. When the child started snoring, the suspect pressed on his neck until he died and then put him in a plastic bag and buried him at a relative's farm in Madaba. Brig. Gen. Ensour said the

suspect, who was unemployed, and was a resident of Um Utheina suburb in Amman, "confessed willingly to committing the murders."

The police official said that a 35-year-old woman, who heard about the crime, led police to the suspect. He did not elaborate.

At the end of the press conference, which was held at the Amman Police Department headquarters, Brig. Gen. Ensour said that "the city has witnessed several crimes in the past two months committed by foreign labourers."

"These crimes are related to the social and economical changes and other circumstances which effected the Kingdom in the past six years," the police official said.

EU leaders urge Israel not to rule out Palestinian state

(Continued from page 1)

excluding the option of a state."

It was the first important EU statement on the Middle East crisis since its summit a year ago in Florence, Italy. There, European leaders said they supported self-determination for the Palestinians, but they said nothing about a Palestinian state.

France said Wednesday the declaration was its initiative, an attempt to ease tensions "as the peace process goes through its most grave crisis," French Foreign Ministry Spokesman Jacques Rummelhardt said in Paris.

"France hopes that this call

will be favourable to the relaunch of peace negotiations and the restoration of confidence," he said.

The EU's declaration was sure to please the Palestinians, angry at the U.S. Congress for issuing a resolution declaring Jerusalem the undivided capital of Israel.

Israel captured Arab east Jerusalem from Jordan during the 1967 Mideast war. Palestinians claim Arab east Jerusalem, home to 180,000 Palestinians, as a future capital, and the city is holy to both sides.

The EU said President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt was playing a crucial role in attempting to

bring the two sides together, and they pledged their support.

Tensions have been rising between the Israelis and the Palestinians since a deadlock emerged in the Egyptian-brokered talks. Dozens of people have been injured in rock-throwing clashes over the past week.

"It is time to take concrete steps towards a lasting peace," the EU said. European leaders, particularly the French, have been trying to widen their role as serious players in the peace process. The EU is paying more attention to the Palestinians, drawing criticism from Israel that Europe is too sympathetic to the Palestinian cause.

Three hurt in Hebron...

(Continued from page 1)

between Israelis and Palestinians over the key issue of Jewish settlement activity in occupied Arab areas.

The Israelis will be led to Cairo by Danny Naveh, the coordinator of the negotiating team and a close confidant of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, a spokesman in the prime minister's office said.

Also participating in the mission will be Netanyahu legal advisor Yitzhak Molkho and Foreign Ministry official Yuacov Bardugo, he said.

The Palestinians broke off negotiations after Mr.

Netanyahu ordered work to begin on March 18 on a new settlement for 30,000 Jews in Arab east Jerusalem.

Palestinian National Authority (PNA) is demanding Israel halt all construction of Jewish settlements on occupied land as a condition for resuming negotiations on a final status agreement for the territories. Israel has refused. Foreign Minister David Levy said Tuesday that Israel was proposing a "code of conduct" that could be agreed by the two sides to lessen tensions and regulate relations during final status negotiations.

Israeli analyst says Likud cabinet ...

(Continued from page 12)

International Association of Middle Eastern Studies.

The speakers strongly described U.S. policies as openly biased in favour of Israel and maintained that Washington does not have the pre-requisites to effectively mediate between the parties to the peace process.

Referring to the U.N. General Assembly voting, last month, on a resolution to condemn the construction of the Jewish settlement in Jabal Abu Ghneim, Mr. Kapeliok noted that the voting made apparent that, on the international arena, "it is the U.S. and Israel against the rest of the world."

Mr. Rouleau went further, concluding that "more than the people involved in the negotiations, it has been the role of the U.S. to block the peace process."

Washington's "unconditional diplomatic support to Israel" is instrumental to the U.S. goal of "keeping strategic supremacy on the Arab World and the monopoly of the peace process," he said.

Mr. Rouleau said the

possibilities that the peace process would succeed are being hindered by the facts that the role of the U.S. is much greater than that of the other co-sponsor, (Russia), and that Israel and the Palestinians were left to conduct bilateral negotiations, on their own.

"It is like putting a wolf and a lamb in the same cage and expecting them to reach an agreement," he said.

For historic and geographic reasons, as well as economic considerations, Israel is the main commercial partner of many European states, he said. "Europe has all the interest in a viable solution in the area," and urged a more prominent EU role in the peace process.

Calling for international efforts to resume peace negotiations, Mr. Egeland said "the outside world still has a useful supporting role to play."

"From time to time the negotiation process will, as now, run into difficulties, where outside ideas, suggestions and practical assistance may prove useful...even a simple phone call showing interest and

concern can be helpful."

"At the more difficult moments of the peace process, outside attention and pressure, making the parties aware of how much emphasis the international community puts on keeping the peace process on track can be necessary to break a deadlock," he said.

Conflict resolution must be based on balance of power, both at the international and regional levels, and on balance of interests, "not of the governments, but of the peoples," Mr. Basheer stressed, adding that "Israelis must abandon the illusion that the Palestinians are there [in Palestine] just in transit, on their way to some other Arab country."

Once both Israelis and Palestinians accepted each other's presence in "such a small area," Mr. Basheer said, they would be ready to work out "not necessarily a just peace, but, at least, a practical, viable, civilised one."

Erekat says Netanyahu encourages settlers to confiscate land

(Continued from page 1)

army used live ammunition and rubber bullets against Palestinian youths.

"Frankly speaking we are in a crisis. A real crisis...the situation on the ground is very difficult," said Mr. Erekat following a one-hour meeting with Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali.

"We tried all efforts to remove the barriers that deviate the peace process from its path, especially the Israeli settlement activities, land confiscation, Judaisation of Jerusalem and now Netanyahu has invented a new campaign that authorises settlers to expand their settlements...and if this continues, it will become a law," said Dr. Erekat.

Responding to a question

on Egypt's mediation efforts to reach a breakthrough to the four-month-old stalled peace talks, the Palestinian official said the Egyptian peace endeavours are "faced with intransigence and stubbornness."

"Mr. Netanyahu has escalated his settlement campaigns, confiscation of land and the language of bulldozers and dictation...it is too early to issue our judgement on the Egyptian move...but at the same time we should not raise the ceiling of optimism and expectation," said Dr. Erekat, who held talks with Egyptian officials on Monday in a bid to overcome the deadlock in the peace talks.

He added that an Israeli delegation headed by Dani Naveh, an aide to Mr.

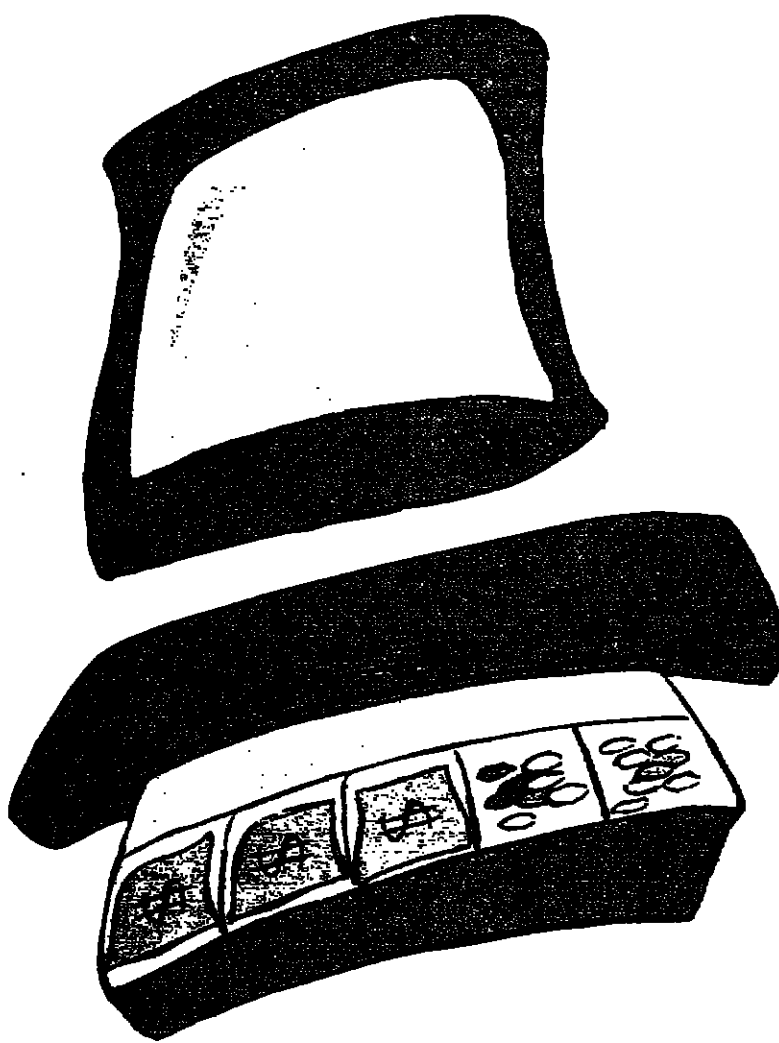
Netanyahu, was expected to meet with Osama Al Baz, President Hosni Mubarak's political advisor, Wednesday "to hear from the Israeli side their reaction" on the Egyptian mediation. "We are faced with an Israeli government that wants to give the impression that if settlement activities stop, it will fall down. We say to them, if settlement activities continue, the peace process will fall. This is the equation," Dr. Erekat said.

During his meeting with Dr. Majali, the Palestinian official briefed Dr. Majali on recent developments and "the details of all efforts being exerted to restore confidence and credibility to the peace process and put the peace process back on track."

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Department of Statistics completes 40 per cent of agricultural census

By Samir Ghawi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — About 900 civil servants from the Department of Statistics (DoS), the Ministry of Agriculture and other government institutions are currently touring the Kingdom to collect data related to agriculture.

The collection of data is the second stage of the 1997 Agricultural Census that aims at establishing a database on the structure of Jordan's farming and livestock sector. Abdul Wadood Maatouk, the census assistant executive director, told the Jordan Times Wednesday.

The first stage was a preparation period that extended from September 1996 to March 1997 while the implementation stage which started on May 17, 1997 is expected to continue until Aug. 10 of this year, Mr. Maatouk said.

Noting that the census involves house-to-house visits in Amman and all cities and villages all over the Kingdom, the team of enumerators has now completed 40 per cent of the work, the DoS official indicated.

He revealed that the analysis of the data

would require between seven and eight months and, consequently, the results of the census could be published by the spring of 1998.

Mr. Maatouk said that agricultural census in Jordan are conducted every 10 years but noted that the last one was in 1983. He explained that the four-year delay was due to the lack of financial resources.

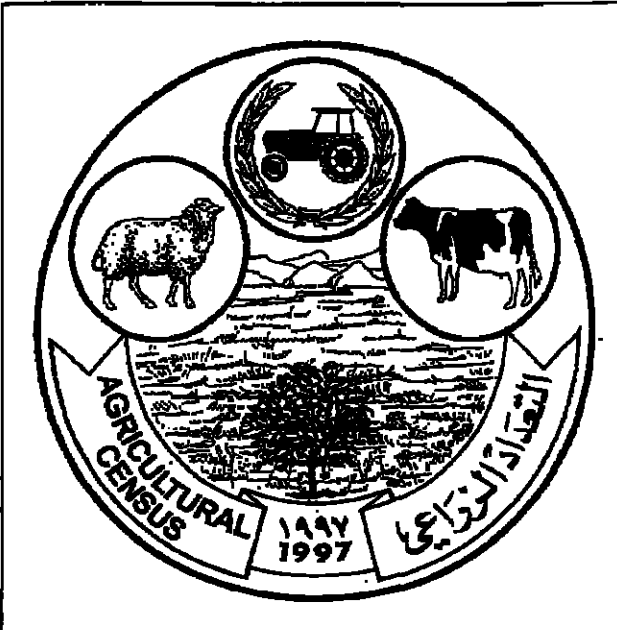
"We have requested that funds be allocated in the government budget for this purpose for many but only succeeded to get the required money in 1997," Mr. Maatouk indicated.

Asked about the objectives of the census in general, Mr. Maatouk listed the following points:

1) Identifying agricultural holdings in terms of numbers and

2) Identifying the characteristics of the agricultural sector in terms of the location of the holdings, the labour force, general information about the holders or farmers and the crops.

The crops item covers the kinds of vegetables, fruits or field crops and also include the area planted, the methods of plantation and irrigation.



3) Identifying the livestock and poultry farms in terms of numbers, sex, kind and age

4) Valuing the fixed assets such as construction and equipment.

5) Obtaining other agricultural applications such as the usage of chemicals and fertilisers, soil testing, sources of finance as well as sources of extension or agricultural awareness.

Maatouk indicated that the role of the DoS ends by providing the data to the concerned ministries and departments as well as other interested parties.

He pointed out that in general, the ministries of agriculture and planning and the Agricultural Marketing Organisation will be the main parties to benefit from the census in addition to universities and researchers.

"As such, every institution will be viewed from a different perspective," Mr. Maatouk concluded.

HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR FRIDAY, JUNE 20, 1997

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Come to a mutually beneficial agreement today with a group of close friends. You'll have a lot of energy, later this evening, so be sure to use it constructively and thereby you can be quite successful.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Do something unique with your mate today, and put the spice back in your relationship. You should not neglect to pay any important bills which have become due and thereby you will have the financial position in an emergency.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Don't hide your light under the proverbial bushel today so that when the opportunity presents itself you will shine and make your presence known to a bigwig. Go out and meet some people socially which can be quite beneficial.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) If you ask a superior today for suggestions on how to improve your efficiency, this person will be more than happy to comply with your request. Later this evening will be good for seeking out the company of close friends.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) If you must take a trip in the days ahead, make arrangements today, however, be very careful about the details. Have a good time with friends later this evening who are excited about going out on the town with you.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) This is a good time to get your personal and business affairs in better order today, and increase your efficiency. Plan something new to please your mate and thereby keep the sparks of romance alive with him or her.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) It is your habit to carefully analyse all situations, however, taking too long today

could cost you some money. Be sure to drive very carefully while on the highway later this evening, thereby avoiding any difficulties.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) If you feel particularly energetic today, get ahead on your career activities instead of sitting around on your hands and going nothing. Later this evening will be a good time to meet with knowledgeable people for advice.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Be more sure of yourself today, since you have many fine ideas have gone unused for too long. Enjoy your friends later this evening and plan some special recreational activities which will be quite fun.

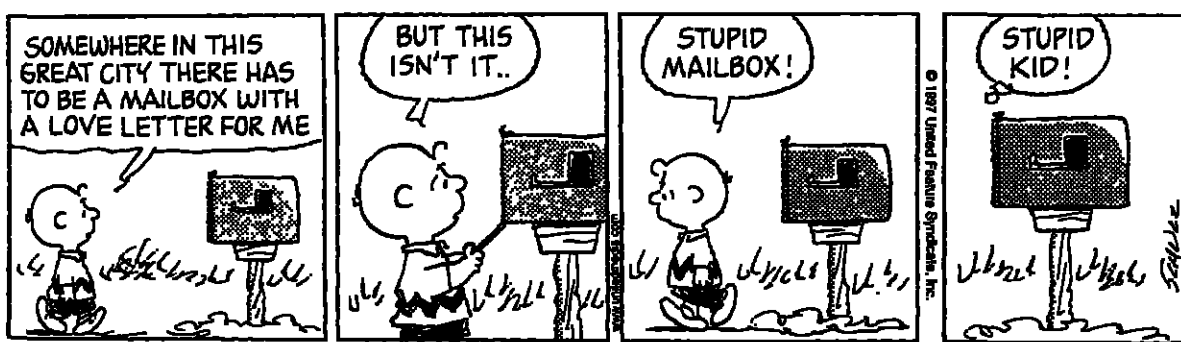
CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You can change the conditions in your home today and create a much more harmonious atmosphere there. You should avoid any disagreements later this evening, especially with your loved ones so that harmony can exist.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) If you go out and visit some people today you haven't seen for quite a long time, you can gain some fine benefits and improve your mood. Later this evening will be a good time to meet with fellow associates and make a plan of action.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You will have some good ideas today which could lead to much greater prosperity, however, be sure to check them out with a competent person first and determine if your plans have any merits for success.

Birthstone of June: Pearl — Moon Stone

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



REUTERS

REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	SEK	ITL	NLS	FRF
US Dollar	-	1.7244	0.9104	1.4426	113.03	1.3670	1690.00	1.9410	5.8220
DE Mark	0.5799	-	0.3537	0.8366	88.80	0.8039	980.00	1.1249	3.3747
GB Sterling	1.0382	2.8257	-	2.3644	185.07	2.2722	2771.34	3.1804	9.5411
CH Franc	0.6932	118.46	0.4226	-	78.32	0.9610	1170.95	136.43	4.0326
JP Yen	0.0088	1.5257	0.5380	1.2763	-	1.2271	14.95	171.48	5.1501
CA Dollar	0.7210	1.2563	0.4421	1.0445	1.23	-	1233.19	1.4132	4.2417
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0197	0.3608	0.0853	1498.13	0.8202	-	11.47	3.4425
NL Guilder	0.5162	88.57	0.3145	74.36	58.23	0.7148	871.07	-	2.9999
FR Franc	0.1718	0.2962	0.1046	24.7720	19.39	0.2382	33.32	33.3200	-

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	QAR	BAH	ADP	IRR	EGP	LYD
US Dollar	-	0.7080	3.7506	0.3770	3.6386	0.3023	3.6725	1635.50	3.3899
Jordan Dinar	1.4124	-	5.2075	0.5325	5.1410	0.4270	5.1871	2168.78	4.7874
GB Sterling	0.2666	0.1688	-	0.1005	0.97	0.0806	0.98	409.40	0.9037
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.8780	9.9485	-	9.65	0.8019	9.74	4072.94	8.9906
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1945	1.0304	1.0304	-	0.0831	1.01	421.86	0.9312
Kuwait Dinar	3.3080	2.3420	12.4069	1.2471	12.04	-	12.15	5079.39	0.9312
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1928	1.0213	1.0213	0.9911	0.0823	-	418.11	0.9329
Lebanese/1000	0.65	0.4611	2.4426	0.2455	2.3704	0.1969	2.3917	-	2.2074
Egyptian	0.2590	0.2089	1.1060	0.1112	1.0739	0.0892	1.0635	453.02	-

Energy		Oil	Gas
Brent	17.50	17.45	-
WTI	19.25	19.05	-
Bonny	17.50	17.45	-
Dubai	18.81	18.83	-
Uthmaniyah	185.00	187.00	-

Mid-East Currencies									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	SEK	ITL	NLS	FRF
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.4600	0.1627	0.3485	30.1632	-	-	-	-
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.46881	0.16822	0.38304	30.7806	-	-	-	-
KW Dinar	3.3080	2.3420	12.4069	1.2471	12.04	-	-	-	-
BH Dinar	0.3770	0.57666	1.81917	3.62846	299.85	-	-	-	-
CY Pound	1.546	3.3557	1.1875	2.8069	219.879	-	-	-	-

Metal Prices		Gold	Silver	Platinum	AL (3 Months)	CU (3 Months)	Zinc (3 Months)	Lead (3 Months)	Ni (3 Months)
Gold (oz's)	341.4	341.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Silver (oz's)	472	474	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Platinum (oz's)	407	412	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
AL (3 Months)	1600	1602	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CU (3 Months)	2602	2606	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Zinc (3 Months)	1370	1373	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lead (3 Months)	623	626	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ni (3 Months)	7250	7270	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	SEK	ITL	NLS	FRF
USD	5.43	5.85	5.76	5.84	5.96	-	-	-	-
GBP	6.31	6.50	6.82	6.88	6.88	-	-	-	-
JPY	0.41	0.53	0.47	0.57	0.61	-	-	-	-
DEM	2.81	2.88	2.94	2.94	3.18	-	-	-	-
FRF	3.13	3.31	3.35	3.39	3.43	-	-	-	-
CHF	1.06	1.18	1.28	1.50	1.50	-	-	-	-
ITL	6.73	6.75	6.83	6.80	6.48	-	-	-	-

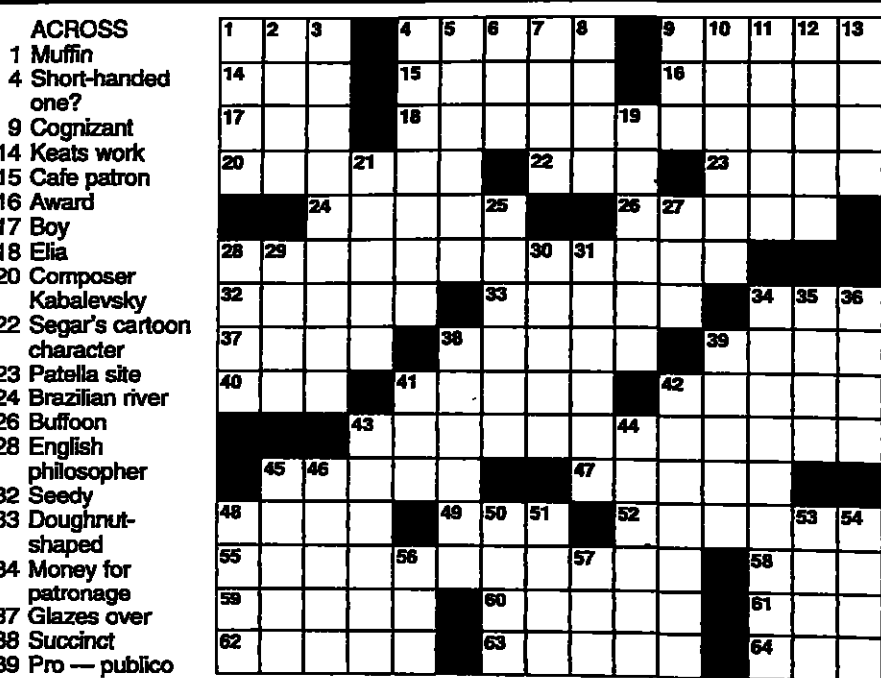
Main Equity Indices									
Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	Open	Close	Settle
New York	DOW JONES	7728.21	-32.57	-0.42	7758.87	7697.8	7760.78	-	-
New York	S&P 500	889.53	-4.49	-0.5	894.42	887.03	894.42	-	-
London	FT-SE 100	4647.5	-34.7	-0.74	4688.1	4627.3	4682.2	-	-
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	20497.85	-95.81	-0.47	20620.4	20428.7	20593.7	-	-
Paris	CAC 40	2738.31	-23.89	-0.86	2747.06	2724.52	2762.5	-	-
Frankfurt	DAX	3739.27	-11.21	-0.3	3734.19	3719.32	3741.48	-	-

Energy			Commodity	Last	Settle
Coffee (c/lb)	208.25	Spot	Cocoa (\$/ton)	1644	Spot
Sugar (\$/ton)	329	Spot	Wheat (\$/ton)	149.5	Spot
Soya (c/lb)	23.04	Spot	Tea (kg/kg)	145	Spot
Barley (\$/bush)	0	Spot	Rice (\$/ton)	480	Spot

JOD Cross Rates			Currency	USD	DEM
US Dollar	0.708	0.710	DEM	1.680	1.685
GB Sterling	0.4087	0.4117	CHF	0.4098	0.4091
CH Franc	0.1218	0.1221	JP Yen	0.6239	0.627
FR Franc	0.3644	0.3662	NL Guilder	0.4182	0.4203
IT Lira	0.4182	0.4203	-	-	-

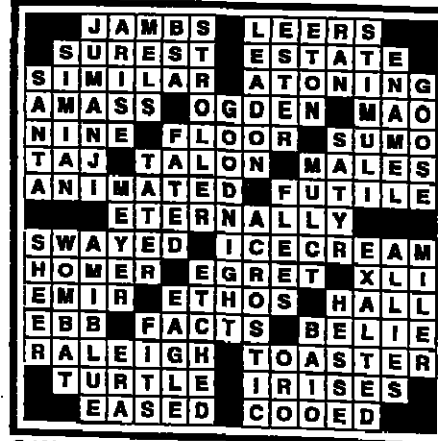
* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

THE Daily Crossword



by Gayle Waters Dean

Thursday's Puzzle solved:



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HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR THURSDAY, JUNE 19, 1997

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Be very precise today in handling business related matters, and get good results which can be quite helpful. Use tact and diplomacy in all your dealings at this time and thereby you can gain the recognition of any superiors.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Listen to the ideas of a new fellow business associate today, as this person has your best interests at heart. Be sure to drive very carefully later this evening, thereby avoiding any difficulties in the days ahead.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You should not disagree over any responsibilities today which are rightfully yours. If you don't criticise your mate later this evening, you can be very happy while you are in his or hers company which can be quite pleasant.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) A superior can help you to solve a ticklish difficulty, so avoid disagreeing with this person and thereby avoid any adverse situation. Handle any public affairs later this evening which could be of importance.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You should not take any risks this morning, however, a little gamble in the evening could be quite rewarding to the success of your career activities. Get your home in order before inviting in guests and making them feel welcome.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) If you try to push through your career activities today, you're liable to make some costly errors which may not be beneficial. Have a friendly chat with your fellow associates later this evening and devise a plan of action.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You would be wise to avoid any disagreements this morning, as these would interfere with your schedule. Don't let a grouchy fellow associate upset you can make your career activities quite so successful.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You should not start any new projects today until you feel you have the energy to complete them. Pay more attention to the state of your health, and thereby you can make the proper decisions which cannot wait.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Don't criticise the actions of a good friend today, as this person has motives you don't understand or prepared to implement. Get more rest than usual tonight, since you need to maintain a level head for the days ahead.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) A troubling situation at home today can be solved with a little teamwork. You should not allow a person who is down in the dumps ruin your good mood or you won't get any important tasks accomplished.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) If you be out and about today, drive with the utmost care while on the high and thereby avoid any difficulties. You would be better off staying at home and relaxing with a good book and rest up for a stressful days ahead.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Be careful about spending too much money this morning, as you will need it badly in the days ahead. Be very careful in motion of any kind, especially while being on the highway and visiting close friends.

Birthstone of June: Pearl — Moon Stone

Ports head, clearance chief and businessman analyse Syrian factor on Jordan's ties with Baghdad

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordanians differ on whether the Kingdom will suffer from the Syrian-Iraqi trade rapprochement and the Iraqi government's request to the U.N. to consider its borders with Syria as an outlet for goods in line with the oil-for-food agreement that Baghdad signed with the United Nations.

While Mohammad Dalabieh, head of Ports Corporation, believes that the Port of Aqaba will not be affected by Iraq's reported intention to import goods through the Syrian ports of Tartous and Latakia, a prominent businessman said that Jordanian trade and Aqaba port will be affected by the rapprochement.

A team of Iraqi businessmen Wednesday left Damascus after discussing the

resumption of trade with their western neighbour. The Syrian government last week reopened a border point between the two countries to facilitate the flow of goods to Iraq.

The Agency France Presse said Wednesday that the Iraqi government has submitted a request to the U.N. to add the Abu Stamat border point with Syria to the list of outlets from which Iraq can import its humanitarian purchases.

"I don't think that such a move will have any negative impact on Jordan," said Captain Dalabieh,

"The Aqaba port is the best in the region in terms of prices and services extended to the ships," Capt. Dalabieh said.

He added that according to the oil-for-food agreement, which allows Iraq to export \$2 billion of oil in return for humanitarian purchases, recognises Aqaba port and Um Qasr in the Arabian Gulf as the only hubs for Iraq-bound goods.

He indicated that in the past six months, only two ships loaded with wheat for Iraq arrived in Aqaba and "this happened because the Iraqi port is

not capable to receive ships loaded with cargo more than 30,000 tonnes."

Capt. Dalabieh predicted that the sector that might be negatively affected by the Iraqi-Syrian rapprochement is trade and the Iraqi imports of Jordanian goods. "I think what Iraqis were looking for in Syria was to import Syrian-made products such as wheat, foodstuffs and textile. This is the real challenge for Jordanian industry," Mr. Dalabieh said in a telephone interview with the Jordan Times.

But a prominent businessman, who spoke in

condition of anonymity, said that "Jordan will be affected by such rapprochement because an active movement of goods will start from Syria to Iraq as well as smuggling between the two countries." "There are signals that Syria will reduce clearance fees in its ports. This clearly will affect Aqaba port... The economic recession in the country cannot tolerate new competition. I do not want to talk about this because it will affect the economy here," the well informed businessman said.

"The \$255 million trade

protocol with Iraq, which is exempted from the U.N. sanctions, will not be affected," he added.

Salim Jadoun, president of the Jordan Clearance Association, said that Aqaba port will not be affected by the Iraqi-Syrian move, but "competition will be clear when sanctions are lifted. At that moment Aqaba might be affected if Iraqis resort to other ports."

Mr. Jadoun said that among the problems that face Aqaba port is the presence of Lloyds Register inspectors who not only inspect Iraq-bound goods

but also goods for domestic consumption. This leads to more delay in the transportation of these goods.

But Capt. Dalabieh said that even if sanctions are lifted, "all ports in the region will not be enough to import and unload goods for Iraq."

But the businessman disagreed.

"It is like two people sharing one loaf of bread. When a third person comes and asks to have a share, the two will have less to eat," he emphasised.

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Drop in glycerine prices, selling of printing press cut sales of Jordan Industrial Resources

THE SELLING of the printing press and the sharp drop in the prices of glycerine were the main two factors behind the 6.2 per cent drop in the sales of the Jordan Industrial Resources Company. Despite the drop in sales to JD9.2 million, the company was able to post JD1.4 million in net profit last year compared to JD925,900 in 1995.

According to board chairman, Ramzi Muasher, the price of glycerine, which is one of the main products of the company, went down sharply from \$2,500 per tonne in 1995 to \$1,400 per tonne in 1996.

As for the printing press, Mr. Muasher indicated that the board had decided on its sale after detecting that demand on the products of the plant has been negatively affected. "As such, the drain on cash from anticipated loss was stopped," the chairman told the shareholders.

Mr. Muasher explained that competition has intensified as a result of setting up new printing presses. As the market could not absorb the increased capacity, most printing presses started selling at a loss, he indicated.

Other factors that influenced the decision to get rid of the printing business have been the low volume of exports requiring printed carton packaging and the change in the methods of packaging at some industries, Mr. Muasher pointed out.

He said that the sale of the printing press had many advantages the most important of which was providing the company with over JD2 million in cash liquidity that would help in executing future plans. He told the general assembly that in 1997, the company's board of directors plans to continue the practical measures to invest in either or both the local and outside markets.

"Such investments will be in setting up industrial projects that require the raw materials that the company produces at present," the chairman explained noting that the board will study establishing a viable industry in the premises of the printing press.

According to the balance sheet for 1996, the company's total assets amounted to JD14.6 million compared to JD15.2 million in 1995. Fixed assets were down to JD7.2 million from JD9.2 million in 1995.

The general assembly concluded its meeting by approving the recommendation of the board of directors to distribute JD800,000 in dividends to shareholders at a rate of 10 per cent. JD546,000 were transferred to retained earnings (Al Ra'i + Al Aswaq).

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
JORDANIAN BANK CENTER AMMAN - SYRIANA											
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDNESDAY 18/06/1997											
PART 12 MONTHS HIGH	COMPANY'S NAME	P/E	DIV.	NO. OF SHARES	NO. OF TRADING	VALUE TRADED JD	OFFER PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE		
249,000	213,000	ADAB BANK	11.6	1.53	2	80	20160	252.00	252.00	0.00	0.00
2,340	1,680	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	8.1	0.00	84	64485	126293	2.11	2.09	-0.02	-0.02
2,760	2,760	BANK OF JORDAN	6.6	0.00	4	726	2218	1.12	1.13	0.01	0.01
2,210	1,890	KID. EAST INV. BK.	6.11	0.00	4	1100	1026	1.94	1.93	-0.01	-0.01
1,430	1,120	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	8.2	7.55	3	2100	4685	1.88	1.87	-0.01	-0.01
1,700	1,250	THE JORDANIAN BK.	14.8	2.52	15	12271	55795	4.93	4.95	0.02	0.02
3,270	2,440	JOR. EAST INV. BK.	11.9	0.00	58	11884	29780	3.27	3.26	-0.01	-0.01
1,020	780	JOR. C.T.P. BANK	9.2	7.95	31	78450	64811	1.88	1.88	0.00	0.00
4,050	3,480	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	15.0	3.25	3	138	504	2.10	2.09	-0.01	-0.01
1,840	1,210	UNION BK. SAV. INV.	9	0.00	2	1100	1175	1.08	1.07	-0.01	-0.01
3,820	3,000	JOR. INV. FTS. BANK	20.1	16.00	4	131	469	1.20	1.13	-0.07	-0.07
2,790	1,800	BANK AL-HAL (BETTER)	7	14.00	6	1100	1175	1.08	1.07	-0.01	-0.01
MARK SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 194.31 CHG: -0.05 221 16771 328230											
2,350	1,620	JOR. FRENCH SECUR.	4.8	11.75	1	250	425	1.79	1.70	-0.09	-0.09
3,510	2,880	JORDANIAN GULF SECUR.	9	0.00	2	500	735	2.54	2.45	-0.09	-0.09
DEBT SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 112.86 CHG: -0.66 3 550 1160											
1,820	1,450	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	7.9	6.10	20	9175	15146	1.64	1.64	0.00	0.00
1,540	1,280	DAVID ELECTRICITY	8.3	9.46	2	230	339	1.38	1.38	0.00	0.00
1,380	930	MATL. PORTFOLIO	9	0.00	2	200	239	1.18	1.23	0.05	0.05
1,860	1,480	JORDAN. SECUR. TRAD.	29.2	0.00	40	4500	422	1.12	1.12	0.00	0.00
9,300	6,900	ALBAI	22.5	7.24	1	120	700	7.00	7.00	0.00	0.00
7,570	5,900	AD-SECUR.	19.3	4.44	6	1000	4732	4.73	4.73	0.00	0.00
2,950	1,170	KID. EAST INV. BK.	10.7	0.00	6	650	1040	1.24	1.23	-0.01	-0.01
3,720	2,900	ARAB INTL. INV. EDUC.	7.6	0.00	1	600	1740	2.90	2.90	0.00	0.00
1,230	960	QATAR EDUCATION	9	0.00	6	2910	2163	0.77	0.77	0.00	0.00
2,230	1,620	UNITED CO.	7.9	6.63	3	2000	3320	1.66	1.66	0.00	0.00
EQUITY SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 211.12 CHG: -0.36 47 20925 31771											
4,450	3,060	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	27.1	2.73	19	13780	35410	4.02	4.03	0.01	0.01
4,440	3,710	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINES	11.0	2.53	12	12385	48917	3.99	3.95	-0.04	-0.04
7,960	6,250	ARAB POTASH CO.	15.6	2.39	3	3000	2065	6.83	6.78	-0.05	-0.05
10,250	8,720	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	9.3	9.21	9	1275	12334	9.76	9.65	-1.10	-1.10
7,750	6,000	JORDANIAN TRADING	7.5	4.92	4	250	5125	5.01	5.01	0.00	0.00
1,470	1,050	MOORE INDUSTRIES	10.7	8.04	2	1200	1129	1.24	1.24	0.00	0.00
3,260	1,650	INDUSTRIAL COMP. ASP.	9	0.00	2	900	1764	1.98	1.96	-0.02	-0.02
1,300	6,400	JOR. POWER	10.4	2.10	4	1765	1145	6.45	6.45	0.00	0.00
4,000	2,040	ARAB FARM. MARK.	10.6	5.19	12	2567	9875	3.85	3.85	0.00	0.00
2,570	2,050	JORDAN DAILY	7.8	10.54	2	107	248	2.32	2.42	0.10	0.10
2,000	1,370	JOR. PAPER INDUSTRY	17.4	5.71	8	2940	3694	1.37	1.40	0.03	0.03
5,560	4,250	DAR AL-BAHAR DEV. INV.	13.3	4.40	3	650	3518	5.43	5.43	0.00	0.00
3,560	2,930	ARAB ALUM. IND.	6.7	6.48	2	650	2448	9.92	9.92	0.00	0.00
1,960	1,450	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	10.2	0.00	24	34400	15512	1.48	1.48	0.00	0.00
1,310	2,100	ARAB ALUM. IND. TRD.	32.1	6.48	2	2100	2105	1.95	1.95	0.00	0.00
1,810	1,520	NATIONAL SECUR.	9	0.00	2	2000	1100	0.55	0.55	0.00	0.00
1,330	1,030	INTERMED. PETRO. CHEM.	9	0.00	9	8700	8287	0.93	0.93	0.00	0.00
1,390	1,050	JOR. CEMENT-CHEN	9	0.00	2	820	2156	0.86	0.86	0.00	0.00
1,320	1,120	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	17.7	5.04	7	2950	2543	1.29	1.29	0.00	0.00
2,480	1,710	UNIV. HOLY TRD.	1.8	1.8	25	21100	28099	1.37	1.33	-0.04	-0.04
1,520	1,120	JOR. INV. RESOURCES	15.1	8.53	13	3600	4532	1.13	1.12	-0.01	-0.01
1,160	1,160	JOR. DEV. CHEN. CO.	15.8	0.00	7	3500	2152	1.47	1.46	-0.01	-0.01
2,090	1,510	EL-CAT READY WEAR	52.8	0.00	6	1272	1908	1.50	1.50	0.00	0.00
1,330	1,080	UNIV. HOLY TRD.	6.2	0.00	10	11900	13533	1.14	1.14	0.00	0.00
1,300	1,050	UNIV. CH. & TDS.	40.3	0.00	3	900	801	0.89	0.89	0.00	0.00
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 127.87 CHG: -0.15 193 135343 257834											
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 159.02 CHG: -0.01 464 324588 618995											
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDNESDAY 18/06/1997											
1,760	1,410	MACH. OIL. REPT. HALL	9	0.00	5	49150	30997	0.99	0.99	0.00	0.00
1,640	1,350	CENTRAL BUS. STORAGE	9	0.00	4	4000	2500	0.79	0.79	0.00	0.00
1,720	1,410	JOR. GRADE FAC.	13.1	0.00	2	1000	1200	1.20	1.20	0.00	0.00
1,650	1,120	TANA FOR INVESTMENT	47.1	0.00	3	30000	34500	1.22	1.25	0.03	0.03
1,840	1,460	UNION INV. SOI	9	0.00	5	2172	1482	0.68	0.68	0.00	0.00
1,720	1,370	ARAB FTR. INVEST.	9	0.00	20	24227	12088	0.92	0.90	-0.02	-0.02
1,880	1,730	JOR. INV. HILLS	9	0.00	5	12850	6418	0.50	0.50	0.00	0.00
1,880	1,300	JOR. INV. HILLS-JEKCO	9	0.00	5	3200	705	0.23	0.23	0.00	0.00
1,810	1,400	ARAB FTR. INVEST.	9	0.00	5	3200	705	0.23	0.23	0.00	0.00
1,760	1,400	JOR. INV. HILLS-JEKCO	9	0.00	40	30986	68167	0.83	0.81	-0.02	-0.02
1,960	1,590	READY MIX CONCRETE	11.3	0.00	1	100	188	0.92	0.94	0.02	0.02
1,760	1,370	JOR. CEMENT-CHEN	9	0.00	12	4906	3627	0.74	0.74	0.00	0.00
1,580	1,420	ARAB ELECT. IND.	9	0.00	6	7242	3620	0.50	0.50	0.00	0.00
1,730	1,600	KINETIC PHARM. 713	9	0.00	6	450	371	0.83	0.83	0.00	0.00
1,740	1,660	UNION TOBACCO 751	9	0.00	6	1219	816	0.90	0.90	0.00	0.00
1,310	1,050	HAIR PHARM. 851	9	0.00	100	1800	130	0.39	0.39	0.00	0.00
1,400	1,390	CECIS. 890	22.8	0.00	42	53850	20084	0.39	0.37	-0.02	-0.02
1,900	1,760	PEPS. CERAMIC	21.0	0.00	4	1250	1034	0.80	0.80	0.00	0.00
1,320	1,120	UNION HOLY TRD.	9	0.00	3	1152	714	0.37	0.39	0.02	0.02
1,760	1,580	PEARL SAR. P. CORP.	9	0.00	3	175	99	0.57	0.57	0.00	0.00
1,820	1,590	MATL. PORTFOLIO	9	0.00	1	100	132	0.87	0.87	0.00	0.00
1,000	810	MAT. ALUMINUM. 752	9	0.00	1	250	146	0.83	0.83	0.00	0.00
1,970	1,820	KID. EAST SECUR.	8.1	15.15	9	7720	5019	0.65	0.66	0.01	0.01
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 159.02 CHG: -0.01 464 324588 618995											

Business leader sees Syria as transit point for Iraq trade

DAMASCUS (AFP) — A Syrian business leader has suggested that his country would be an ideal transit route for goods destined for Iraq in line with the U.N. deal easing sanctions against Baghdad.

"The Syrian government could serve Iraqis and European exporters transporting their goods by allowing them to transit via Syrian ports and crossing points" along their joint 600-kilometre border, said Rafeh Shallah, chairman of the Syrian Union of Chambers of Commerce.

Syrian Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam, meanwhile, would not be drawn on the future development of Iraq-Syrian relations in an interview with the official SANA news agency.

"Relations with Iraq are

Ecuador and Argentina reach Copa America quarter-finals

COCHABAMBA, Bolivia (AFP) — Argentina reached the quarter-finals of the Copa America by the skin of their teeth here Tuesday, going through as the second-placed team in group A following a 1-1 draw with Paraguay.

In an incident-packed encounter, Daniel Passarella's men were on the verge of conceding second place to the Paraguayans before Marcelo converted a last-gasp penalty to snatch a point.

Paraguay goalkeeper Jose Luis Chilavert had opened the scoring, also from the penalty spot, in the 75th minute.

The stalemate meant that surprise package Ecuador, who earlier beat Chile 2-1, topped the group with seven points from their three matches to Argentina's five.

Ariel Graziani, who scored in Saturday's win over Paraguay, set the Ecuadorians on their way with a goal after 33 minutes.

And although Fernando Vergara equalised just after the break, Jose Gavica promptly netted what ultimately proved to be the winner after 56 minutes.

Their first ever defeat to Ecuador in a competitive match left Chile, who lost to Argentina at the weekend, bottom of the group with no points from their three matches and just one goal scored.

Ecuador will now face either Colombia or Mexico, who are both battling to take second spot in group C behind Brazil.

Argentina's match boiled over in the final quarter of an hour which saw both goals and the sending off with two minutes remaining of Argentinian defender Pablo Rothen for a second bookable offence.

Uruguayan referee Jorge



Argentine Marcelo Gallardo (L) and Paraguayan Juan Jara fight for possession of the ball during their Copa America Group A match. Paraguay and Argentina tied 1-1 (Reuters photo)

Nieves was kept busy as he booked six players — three on either side.

Argentina, bidding for a 15th title and who last won the tournament in 1993, could have gone behind as early as the third minute, when Roberto Acuna

forced Argentinian keeper Carlos Roa to beat out a fierce shot for a corner.

At the other end Mauricio Pellegrino went close on nine minutes when his header sailed just wide, before Ricardo Rojas and Jose Cardozo spurned chances for Paraguay.

The deadlock was finally broken when rothen fouled Carlos Villamayor in the area and Chilavert strode up to send Roa the wrong way. Gallardo, who had earlier

missed from the spot early in the second half, needed no second bidding when Argentina were awarded a second penalty for pushing in the final minute, lashing the ball past Chilavert.

Argentina are now slated to play the second team in Group B — probably either Peru or holders Uruguay. The Paraguayans can also still qualify for the next phase as one of the two best third-placed teams in the event.

Juninho waves good-bye to Britain

MIDDLESBROUGH (AFP) — Middlesbrough's brilliant Brazilian Juninho is waving good-bye to Britain and a move to Premiership champions Manchester United so he can save his international career.

The 22-year-old midfielder star knows he has to join a top Spanish club to put him back in the spotlight after being snubbed by Brazil for the Copa America Cup.

"Playing for my country means more than money. If I want to be noticed by the Brazil coach Mario Zagalo, I have to be playing in Spain," he said.

"If you play for a small club in Europe, particularly in England, few people will see you play. Italian and Spanish football is shown non-stop on TV here in Brazil. The English game isn't."

"In Spain, Zagalo will be able to watch me every week. If I stayed in England, even with Manchester United, he wouldn't."

"I was annoyed at being left out of the Brazilian squad but I am not bitter towards Zagalo. I know why. He rarely sees me in action."

"It is no good for a player like me, who plays in the Brazilian side and who intends to play in the world cup next year, to be playing in what is the English Second Division."

Juninho is back home in Sao Paulo waiting to hear whether Atletico Madrid or Real Betis have won the race to sign him.

"Atletico and Real Betis are interested, but I have no idea how things are developing. I believe it is just a case of which one will now meet Middlesbrough's asking price."

But the price may not be right for player or club, who paid 4.75 million pounds for him from Sao Paulo in November 1995.

"I was originally quoted at 12.5 million pounds, but I think it is now around 9 million pounds. That is how much it all went wrong at Middlesbrough," he reflected.

Juninho was the bright light in what turned into a nightmare season for the north east club, who were relegated from the Premiership and beaten in the FA and Coca-Cola Cup finals.

Baggio linked with Sampdoria

MILAN (AFP) — Roberto Baggio could be playing for Sampdoria next season after a complex transfer deal involving four European clubs and Frenchman Christian Karembeu.

AC Milan's new coach Fabio Capello, who is returning from Real Madrid, has made it clear that Baggio is not part of his plans to re-build the side after a disastrous season.

Capello is meanwhile a big fan of midfielder Karembeu, and last year reached an agreement with the 26-year-old to bring him to Real when his contract at Sampdoria expires next June.

That move later became embroiled in a separate bid from Barcelona, who ended up paying Sampdoria a fee simply to stop Karembeu from going to their Spanish arch rivals.

Club officials on all sides are now reportedly working on a deal that will make everyone happy.

Milan will give Sampdoria a sum in cash and Baggio for Karembeu, and will compensate Real for the money they have already paid the Frenchman.

Sampdoria would keep some of the transfer fee and hand over the rest to Barcelona,

as compensation for their deal which fell through.

Both the Italian clubs would effectively be unloading players who have been unhappy with their current clubs, and the Spaniards would get back some of their investment.

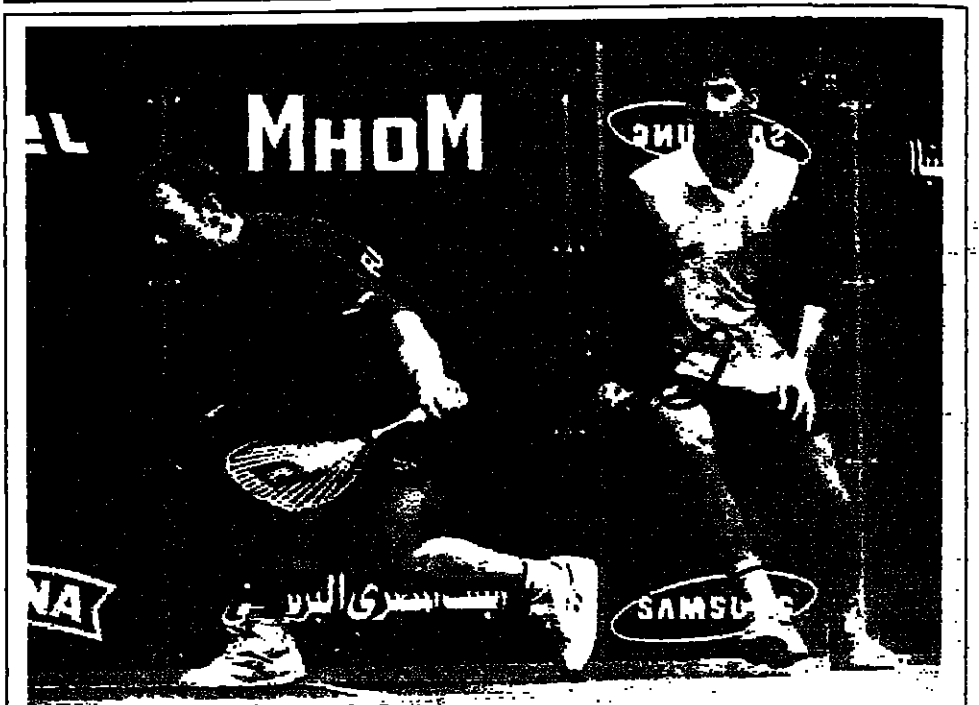
Milan would strengthen their new-look midfield, while Sampdoria would get a star replacement for veteran Roberto Mancini, who is leaving for Lazio.

According to the Corriere dello Sport, the deal could hang on a Japanese sponsor with whom Sampdoria is negotiating for next season.

Baggio is enormously popular in Japan and the sponsor could ease the financing of the big-earning striker's move from Milan.

Baggio, currently on holiday in Argentina, would get a regular first team place and European football (the UEFA Cup) next season — neither of which would be available from Milan.

Regular football move would also give him the chance to achieve his real objective — win a place in Italy's squad for the 1998 World Cup finals.



World squash champion Pakistani Jansher Khan (R) looks on as third seeded Peter Nicol of Scotland dashes for the ball during the final match of the al-Ahram International Squash Championship late. Nicol defeated the reigning champ in a sensational 92-minute match (Reuters photo)

Tauziat ousts Fernandez as Williams downs Rubin

EASTBOURNE (R) — France's Nathalie Tauziat ousted fifth seed Mary Joe Fernandez 7-6 (7-5) 7-5 in the first round of the Eastbourne grasscourt tournament on Tuesday to set up a second-round clash with birthday girl Venus Williams.

Williams marked her 17th birthday with a 6-4 6-4 demolition of world number 26 Chanda Rubin.

The teenager — resplendent in a shimmering silver outfit and with her white-

beaded hair rattling in the south coast sea breeze — needed just 80 minutes to dismiss her fellow American on centre court.

But the Jehovah's witness who says she never celebrates birthdays will not be celebrating this major scalp either. "I've just got another match to play," she said soberly after the victory.

Rubin gifted Williams the opening set with four sloppy unforced errors while serving at 4-5 and it was an uphill battle for her from then on.

The pair exchanged breaks early in the second set as a gusty wind got up but then Rubin, mirroring the opener, was again broken serving at 4-5 to hand Williams the win.

"Last time I played Chanda she really ran through me so yeh, I'm pleased with this," the 6ft 1ins (1.86m) teenager said. "I knew this time I would have to be more aggressive and the court kind of helped me with that."

Rubin won their only other encounter earlier this year on the slow clay courts of Amelia Island 6-4 6-0 but Williams — despite having played just three matches on grass — now

considers herself a grass-court player and was determined to avenge the defeat.

"I've never served and volleyed as much as I am doing on grass and it is really helping me be more aggressive in matches."

Tauziat's grass court game was simply too polished for hard-court specialist Fernandez and her constant forays to the net proved the difference as the 1995 champion here defeated the 1996 runner-up.

The Frenchwoman will be looking to repeat the defeat she handed Williams at the French Open last month.

Earlier, sixth-seeded Romanian Irina Spirlea laboured over beating Argentina's Ines Gorrochatgui 6-0 3-6 6-4 while eighth seed Brenda Schultz-McCarthy, of the Netherlands, ousted grass-court veteran Czech Helena Sukova 6-3 7-6 (7-3).

American seventh seed Kimberly Po took a set and a half to wake up before she eventually saw off the challenge of Slovak Katarina Studenikova 6-6 7-6 (7-5) 6-2.

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GOREN BRIDGE
WITH OMAR SHARIF & YANIV HIRSCH
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SCORE ANOTHER FOR TOMMY
Neither vulnerable. South deals.
NORTH
♠ K 5 3 2
♥ A
♦ Q 4
♣ A Q 7 6 4
WEST
♠ Q J 10
♥ 9 8
♦ A K 9 7 6 5 3
♣ K 9
EAST
♠ 8 7 4
♥ 10 9 8 2
♦ 10 8
♣ J 10 8 3
SOUTH
♠ A 9
♥ Q J 9 8 6 5 4
♦ J 2
♣ 8 5
The bidding:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
40 50 60 70 Pass
Opening lead: King of 0
Club members were amazed to learn that Trump Coup Tommy had won the club's individual Championship. Tommy, at best an ordinary player, started only when trumps broke badly. However, it seemed that the dealer was suited to his particular talent. This was the first hand out of the box.
Only someone like Tommy would dream of opening the South hand with four hearts — if you must open, three hearts is more than enough. North, who felt there might be a slam in the cards, cannot be blamed for bidding on rather than doubling, so here was Tommy in another terrible contract.
West cashed the king and ace of diamonds, then shifted to the queen of spades. Tommy was fearless. After winning the ace of spades, he continued with a spade to the king and a spade ruff. A heart to the ace fetched the king, and another spade was ruffed in the closed hand as East discarded a club.
A successful finesse of the queen of clubs provided the entry for another spade ruff. East piling with another club. When a club to the ace lived, Tommy could claim the contract. East was down to 10 7 3 in hearts, declarer held Q J 9 and the lead was in dummy. East had to ruff the club lead and South could not be stopped from scoring the last three tricks.
Just another typical Tommy contract. All it took to get home was to find West with a singleton king of hearts, have spades break 3-3, the club finesse work and East to have started with four clubs. No problem!

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Muster leads exit of seeds

ROSMALAN (AFP) — Karim Alami of Morocco eliminated Austria's fading former World No. 1 Thomas Muster from the ATP tournament here on Tuesday — fifth seed Marc Rosset of Switzerland exited soon after.

The 24-year-old Alami, who became the first Moroccan to win an ATP title when he captured the Atlanta tournament last year, beat Muster, 29, 6-4, 6-2.

Rosset, the 1992 Olympic champion, crashed out to Martin Damm of the Czech Republic also in straight sets 1-6, 6-7 (5/7).

Defending champion Richey Reneberg, 31, was another casualty forced to retire from his match, suffering from tendinitis in his left knee, with Damm's compatriot Daniel Vacek when he trailed 5-7, 0-1.

Wimbledon champion Richard Krajicek, who won this title in 1994, banged down 20 aces as he beat compatriot Paul Haarhuis 7-5, 7-6 (7/4) in 87 minutes.

Top seed Michael Chang, who lost in the second round at Queen's last week, came through in three sets over the 57th ranked Frenchman Fabrice Santoro while Sweden's Jonas Bjorkman, seeded fourth, also needed three sets to dispose of the Czech Republic's Jan Krosiak.



Canadian Formula One driver Jacques Villeneuve waits as mechanics make adjustments to his car at Silverstone circuit before completing test laps. Villeneuve tested the circuit in anticipation of next month's British Grand Prix (Reuters photo)

Loko faces suspended jail term

PARIS (AFP) — French international Patrice Loko faces a suspended eight-month prison sentence and a heavy fine for exposing himself and resisting arrest when he went on a drunken spree two years ago.

A court was told here Wednesday he smashed up two cars (including his own), spat in police officers' faces, urinated in a hospital corridor and demanded to be carried because his feet were

"worth gold."

Loko, whose two goals against Liverpool in April qualified his club, Paris Saint Germain for the European Cup Winners Cup final, told the court he deserved to be punished.

The prosecution said he went on a drunken binge after being transferred from Nantes to Paris for 18 million francs (\$3 million) in July, 1995. Sentence was deferred to next Wednesday.

Jordan Golf Open to be held over the weekend

By Roufan Nahhas
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The 8th Jordan Men's Golf Open Championship will kick off Thursday at the Bisharat Golf Club near Amman National Park.

Around 35 participants from different nationalities and only six Jordanians will compete over 36 holes in the two-day event restricted to amateur players.

"We have British, Irish, Lebanese, French and Saudis taking part," Julia Bisharat manager of the Bisharat Golf Club told the Jordan Times.

"Golf is a very interesting sport and not many Jordanians have any knowledge about this sport. We would like to encourage Jordanians to come and experience the wonders of playing golf," she said.

The Bisharat Golf Club has a special programme with special rates and facilities for Jordanians who are interested in this sport," Bisharat added.

The Bisharat Golf Club was established in 1990 with mostly foreigners registered as members.

"We have around 120 members right now and the number is increasing," P.J. David, a former official and member at the club told the Jordan Times.

He said there are around twenty Jordanians as members in the club, and in the last few years the club witnessed a lot of interest from Jordanians.

"Jordanians who had the chance to go abroad and play golf are now members in the club," he said. "But we would like to see more young Jordanians experiencing this wonderful sport."

This Jordan Open, sponsored by Marriott Hotel, is considered a very important event on the sports scene.

"A lot of people like to come and play and at the same time tour Jordan's historical sites," David noted.

The Bisharat Golf Club holds several tournaments throughout the year — mostly exclusive to its members.

"A new driving range has recently been added to the club's amenities with equipment for hire and professional golf lessons taught with special courses to beginners under the age of 21," he added.

The Bisharat Golf Club is situated close to Amman National Park just off the main highway that runs from Amman to Queen Alia International Airport, about 14 kilometres south of the capital.

The course comprises nine holes with 18 tees. It's rolling hill location with a par of 68, it is considered one of the most challenging courses in the Middle East.

Golf enthusiasts will have the chance to enjoy the tournament starting at 9:00 a.m.

His Royal Highness Prince Ra'ed, a golf player himself, will present the winners with prizes at the end of the competition Friday.

Holders Argentina outplay Hungary in World Youth Cup

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) — Argentina opened their defence of their World Youth Football title with a 3-0 win over Hungary in a Group E match at Kangar Wednesday.

In other matches, Mexico trounced the United Arab Emirates 5-0 in Group F at Johor Baru and Spain carved out a 2-1 victory over Japan in Group D at Kuantan.

Argentina, favourites to retain the title they won two years ago in Qatar by defeating arch-rivals Brazil in the final, produced a masterly tactical display to outplay Hungary.

As the Hungarians crowded Argentina's midfield, the victors attacked from the flanks to run up a 2-0 lead at half-time.

Bernardo Romeo opened the scoring

in the ninth minute and Lionel Scaloni increased the margin three minutes before the interval by heading in a cross from the right flank.

Roman Riquelme sealed Argentina's superiority five minutes after the interval with a freekick from outside the circle that dipped past Hungarian goalkeeper Balazs Raboczki.

Canada and Australia, who clash later on Wednesday, are the other teams in Argentina's group.

The United Arab Emirates, playing the biennial Under-20 tournament for the first time, proved no match for the skilful Mexicans and conceded a 0-2 lead by half-time.

Eduardo Lillingston scored once in each half and Carlos Carino, Gerardo Torres and Omar Santacruz joined in

the goal-hunt against their hapless opponents.

Spain dominated the Japanese defence from the start and were rewarded with two goals by Francisco Farinos in the 22nd minute and Miguel Angulo in the 55th.

The Japanese narrowed the margin in the 65th through Atsushi Yanagisawa's penalty kick but their efforts to draw level were thwarted by the Spanish defence.

Japan will now have to win their remaining games against Costa Rica and Paraguay to ensure their place in the knock-out rounds.

Two top teams and four best third-place finishers from the six groups will move up into the last 16. The final will be played on July 5.

New-look Wimbledon retains traditional feel

LONDON (R) — If they played the World Series on roller blades or banned advertising in Formula One, the culture shock would be instantly familiar to first-time foreign players at Wimbledon.

Those emerald lawns, the hushed dark-green stands, the vicarage tea party atmosphere in the members' enclosure and beyond more than a few have found it tough to handle even before they pick their rackets up and take their first tentative steps on grass.

Andre Agassi and Michael Stich both know how it feels to win the Wimbledon singles title, but can also advise today's unsteady teenagers what it feels like to lose on their debut at the all England club.

So can Jim Courier and Goran Ivanisevic, not to mention Ivan Lendl. In Lendl's case, the "Wimbledon effect" was so powerful he failed to escape its grip in 14 attempts. He gathered eight Grand Slam titles in all, but winning on grass was too much to ask.

This year, though, the 111th championships will require everyone to readjust to unfamiliar surroundings, even Boris Becker who has been back to the All England Club every year since his debut in 1984.

A brand new number one court, as well as two other new outside courts, will be in use following the demolition of the famous old steep-sided version last year. It will seat 11,000 spectators, an increase of 4,500 on its forbear, although anyone expecting a radical change of atmosphere at the world's most traditional sporting event should not get overexcited.

Until they rip up the grass — there will be rock concerts at Buckingham Palace first — Wimbledon will remain a monument to old-fashioned English restraint and decorum.

Instead of christening the new court in a blaze of fireworks, for example, the

authorities decided to invite the BBC to record an edition of the religious programme "Songs Of Praise" to be shown on the tournament's middle Sunday.

Similarly, as technicians worked frantically on Tues-

day to cope with the demands of the 1,800 broadcasters who will be providing television and radio coverage in over 170 countries, as many staff were involved in planting geraniums and pots of instant hanging ivy.

Even tradition has to be given a helping hand before the cameras start rolling but, after 120 years, the all England Club continue to appreciate the value of a little mystique.



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Russia's hopes threatened by cash shortage

MOSCOW (AFP) — The Russian swimming team's preparations for the European Championships in Seville in August may be disrupted by a cash shortage, the Sport Express newspaper reported Wednesday.

Many national stars have been forced to train separately in their local swimming centres in Volgograd, Samara or Saint Petersburg.

More than 20 team members, including Denis Pankratov, a double gold medalist in the 1996 Atlanta Olympic butterfly competition, will leave for Portugal soon for training, but the trip will be personally funded by the team's chief coach Viktor Avdiyenko.

However, Grigory Stetsyuk, executive director of the Russian Swimming Federation, played down the financial problems.

"We are facing some difficulties in attracting money, but it is not affecting the training," he told AFP Wednesday.

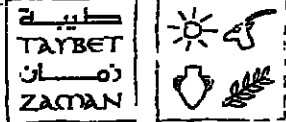
He said Russian sprinter Alexander Popov, who won two gold medals in the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, and added two more in Atlanta, was expected to join the team in Seville just before the championships.

Australia-based Popov has been following his own training programme since he was knifed in a street brawl in Moscow last August.

The Russian star has almost totally recovered since then and aims to take part in a series of minor swimming meetings in Brazil and the United States to shape up for the European Championships.

"Popov is the only swimmer with a guaranteed place in the squad in Seville," said federation chief Gennady Alyoshin.

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Khmer Rouge claim Pol Pot surrendered, start of new era

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — Notorious Khmer Rouge (KR) guerrilla leader Pol Pot surrendered Wednesday, KR radio announced in a special broadcast monitored here, but there was immediate scepticism about the report.

"Pol Pot surrendered on June 18 1997," the radio said in what was described as a "special communiqué" from the KR's provisional government of national unity and salvation. "A new era is beginning," it added.

The radio gave no information on the circumstances surrounding the surrender and there was widespread scepticism of the validity of the report in Phnom Penh.

Several senior members of the Royalist Funcinpec Party (RFP) which has been spearheading negotiations with Pol Pot's underlings said they were either unaware of the report or could not confirm it.

Reports quoting a senior RFP military commander saying that 15 hardline KR members including Pol Pot had surrendered were seen by some as an attempt to manipulate domestic public opinion, as they could not be corroborated by other officials.

The shadowy KR leader, thought to be about 69, has not been seen in public for 17 years and reports last year that he had died were never independently confirmed.

In addition, a senior official with the formerly communist Cambodian People's Party (CPP) which is vehemently opposed to RFP's negotiations, said he believed the broadcast may have been mistranslated.

Khieu Kanharith, a CPP central committee member, said the literal translation of the radio's often vague and propaganda-laced words was that Pol Pot "has already asked" to confess or defect. The Cambodian for surrender is pro-

nounced "chos chhang" while the words used were pronounced "ban som saropheap hou." Saropheap, the verb in the phrase, translates as "confess" or "defect" in English.

"The black cloud of Pol Pot's dictatorial regime which has hung over Cambodia's history since 1975 has been eliminated and destroyed completely by the Cambodian people," the radio said.

One senior Western diplomat expressed extreme scepticism about the use of the metaphorical language, noting that it was vastly different from KR radio's usual blunt and vitriolic propaganda.

"Black cloud, I don't think so," the diplomat said, adding that it sounded more like old RFP propaganda used during their resistance days on the Thai border.

The radio hinted that the KR leadership which has allegedly splintered, were now ready to give up their long guerrilla struggle. "Our international policy is to adhere to the ... principles of peaceful coexistence, international law, the U.N. charter and to establish contact with all friendly nations," the radio statement said.

Cambodian second Prime Minister Hun Sen also urged caution. "This is a game that is being played, and that we cannot believe. ... I believe that this game is organised by Pol Pot himself," he told Agence France Presse (AFP).

Hun Sen said the guerrilla hardliners had their backs to the wall and thus "all of us should be cautious and should not rush to speculate."

Pol Pot led the KR guerrillas who held Cambodia in the grip of terror for four years up to 1979 when they tried to turn the country into an agrarian utopia. During their reign more than two million people died from torture, disease and starvation.

Earlier Wednesday, the governor of Cambodia's Preah Vihear province said feared KR strongman Ta Mok had surrounded Pol Pot and would soon capture him.

Preah Vihear Governor Mean Sarin, speaking in Thailand, said Ta Mok was pursuing Pol Pot with 1,000 soldiers.

"Ta Mok has said he would arrest Pol Pot within the next two-to-three days because he has surrounded Pol Pot, who has hidden himself in an area 20 kilometres from Anlong Veng" base in Preah Vihear, Mean Sarin said.

Pol Pot was believed to be on the run in the dense jungles of northern Cambodia defended by 200 loyalists against 1,000 comrades who last week turned on him.

Cambodia's first Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh on Tuesday raised doubts he would be found alive, following earlier reports his capture near the northern border with Thailand was imminent.

But Cambodian sources on the Thai border said late Wednesday they believed a surrender was imminent because Pol Pot and his dwindling band of supporters had been cut off from all escape routes.

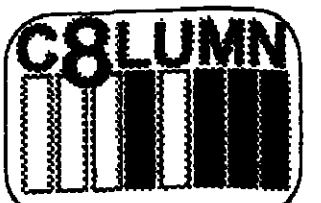
Senior Cambodian defence ministry sources said earlier this month a deal was being worked out for the surrender of the last KR rebel forces in return for the exile of several of the more notorious leaders.

Thousands of KR defectors have been granted amnesty, and have become an unpredictable new element in the competition between the RFP and former communists in the shaky Cambodian coalition government.

Mounting tensions between the two premiers exploded into gun battles late Tuesday on the streets of Phnom Penh which left two people dead.



PRIVATE ENTERPRISE LESS THE OVERHEAD: Two old men make a living selling this and that in down town Amman (Photo by Yousef 'Allan').



Pitt, Paltrow break off engagement

BEVERLEY HILLS, California (AP) — Brad Pitt and Gwyneth Paltrow have broken off their engagement and are splitting up. No reason for the breakup was given in the brief statement released Monday night by Pitt's publicist, Cindy Guagerni. "Brad Pitt and Gwyneth Paltrow have mutually agreed to end their 21.5-year relationship," the statement said. No wedding date had been announced but published reports said the couple had planned to get married as early as this month. There was no word about whether the split would affect plans for the couple to team up for the comedy "duets."

Spaniard, Portuguese win Mediterranean top model prize

HAMMAMET, Tunisia (AFP) — A 16-year-old Spanish girl and a Portuguese man of 22 have been named the 1997 Mediterranean top models by a prestige jury of designers and stars at this tip-top Tunisian resort. Vanessa Gonçalves Rubio and Miguel Teixeira walked off with the prize after parading along the famed Hammamet Ramparts in traditional Tunisian garb and street and beach-wear in a searing three-hour contest. A total 35 aspiring models from 11 countries took part.

Queen leads parade at Ascot

ASCOT, England (AP) — Queen Elizabeth II led the parade of royals, nobles and commoners Tuesday at Royal Ascot's opening day, the pinnacle of Britain's social season that is less about racing horses than watching people. Traditionally, women make themselves easy to be seen with outstanding — and often outrageous — hats. Sally Burton, widow of actor Richard Burton, sported a towering black creation with a slash of white. Men wear more conservative grey morning suits and top hats, but Colin Vassell, a designer and millionaire, said it wasn't fair for the women to have all the fun. He wore a chocolate and peach-coloured top hat, its "lid" tilted open and a large horse's head peering out, made by Japanese designer Fumiko Kiryu. "We think men are ready for a change from the traditional black and grey top hats," Vassell said. The queen wore a modest white straw hat with a pale pink band and a small bunch of lily of the valley.

Pavarotti, Domingo and Carreras unite to rebuild opera houses

MODENA, Italy (AP) — The "Three Tenors" warbled to a sell-out crowd Tuesday night in a charity concert to raise money to rebuild two beloved opera houses. Luciano Pavarotti, playing host in his native city of Modena, teamed with Spaniards Plácido Domingo and Jose Carreras before a crowd of 22,000 at the Braglia soccer stadium. Pavarotti told the audience that Carreras nearly missed the concert because of a fever. "Until yesterday Jose was in bed with a bad companion," he joked. "We are lucky he's here with us tonight." American rock star Michael Jackson and movie director Franco Zeffirelli were among the celebrities who paid up to \$353 for front-row seats. Jackson, who spent the day held up in his \$2,000-a-night hotel suite dodging fans, has a concert Wednesday at a Milan soccer stadium. Tuesday's televised concert raised about \$1.8 million for reconstruction funds for the La Fenice theatre in Venice and Barcelona's grand theatre del Liceu.

Turkish Islamist business feels secularist hard pinch

ANKARA (R) — Islamist businessmen, caught at the centre of a fierce battle between Turkey's secularist military and the crumbling ruling coalition over religious activism, are starting to feel the pinch.

Nowhere are the apparent links between Islam and commercial activity so striking as at Ankara's biggest mosque, where a modern department store is tucked under the towering minarets.

Retail sales at "Begendik," which translates as "we liked it," have suffered after a newspaper published a list, compiled by the military, putting it in a basket with companies believed to foster "political Islam."

A Turkish court on Tuesday froze more than \$100 million worth of accounts and securities belonging to another company on that list, the powerful Kombassan Lading, in order to investigate charges that it raised capital illegally.

A military investigation failed to unearth any Islamist ties with Begendik, which Wednesday launched a counter-offensive with half-page newspaper advertisements, proclaiming its allegiance to secularism with excerpts of a speech by modern Turkey's founder, Kemal Ataturk.

"We were very sorry to see ourselves on that list and our sales fell around 10 per cent

because of it," Begendik General manager, Mustafa Deniz told Reuters.

Begendik has more than 2,000 employees and nine shops, including Turkey's largest department store under Ankara's Kocatepe mosque, where shoppers push supermarket trolleys past the devout heading for prayer.

The store, packed with Western consumer goods, makes no evident concessions to Islam apart from the absence on its shelves of alcohol, forbidden to devout Muslims.

Turkey's secularist media has dragged leading businesses with Islamist credentials into the limelight since the powerful military last week said "100 Islamist businessmen" were backing political Islam financially.

The claims marked a new development in an army-led campaign to crack down on religious activists. Military pressure on the country's Islamist-led coalition since February has brought Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan to the point of resignation after one year in power.

Begendik's Deniz said other companies linked to Islamist activism might not be able to come out of the row unscathed.

"That list has given birth to trouble and polarised companies. Some may not be able to defend themselves as we

have," he said.

The military itself did not identify any companies but the media pointed to Kombassan, based in Erbakan's constituency town of Konya, as among the Islamist firms targeted.

Kombassan was drawn into the firing line with Tuesday's court order to freeze some of its assets for failing to seek permission from the capital markets board to raise capital from expatriate Turks working in Germany.

Kombassan, involved in printing, paper and machinery production and construction, wants to raise its capital to 100 trillion lira from 39.5 trillion — the highest capital of any Turkish company. The media had targeted Kombassan last month when a company courier arriving at Ankara airport was allegedly caught importing 1.7 million marks (\$979,000) illegally from Germany. A board official from another Islamist company, Yimpas Holding, was reportedly caught at the same airport a day earlier trying to smuggle 24 kilograms of gold bullion into the country from Germany. Food retailer Yimpas, based in the conservative town of Yozgat, launched an advertising campaign this week to defend itself against the claims of sponsoring an Islamic revival.

(See story on Erbakan's resignation on page 1)

Iran, Japan to cooperate on damage prevention from earthquake

TEHRAN (AFP) — A Japanese team of earthquake experts is in Iran to visit areas hit by last month's strong quake and to help the Islamic Republic better cope with such catastrophes in the future. Iran's official news agency IRNA reported Wednesday.

The team of experts from the University of Tokyo arrived here Monday and plans to stay for two weeks, it said.

Japan, like Iran an earthquake-prone country, will help Tehran with seismicographic information and give it the benefit of Japanese "experience in building" quake-resistant structures.

The Japanese team is to travel to Qayen and Birjand, south of Khorasan province near the border with Afghanistan, to inspect the region, hit by a 7.1-degree temblor May 10.

The quake, which killed around 1,600 people, was the third of its kind in Iran within three months.

Cohen winds up Gulf tour as Iraq hits back

MUSCAT (AFP) — U.S. Defence Secretary William Cohen, winding up a tour of five Gulf Arab monarchies, renewed warnings over threats from Iran and Iraq Wednesday as Baghdad hit back at what it called "American blackmail."

Mr. Cohen met Omani Sultan Qaboos before flying home, the official news agency ONA reported.

He slammed "Iraq's continuing disregard for its obligations under U.N. Security Council resolutions and ... Iran's intentions toward its neighbours and larger global community."

"The U.S. stands ready to contribute to where it can to strengthening the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) as a whole, a message I have underscored with leaders in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain and the UAE (United Arab Emirates)," he said in a departure statement.

The GCC also includes Qatar, whose Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani held talks in Washington last week.

At each stop on his tour, which started in Saudi Arabia Saturday, Mr. Cohen underlined the U.S. commitment to keep its forces in the region to protect the flow of oil and contain Iraq and Iran.

He disclosed Tuesday in Bahrain that Iran successfully tested Chinese air-to-ship cruise missiles this month, a new capability which reduces the reaction time of U.S. warships in case of attack.

Oman, facing Iran, controls the western side of the Strait of Hormuz, the only passage into the Gulf. An estimated 17 per cent of the world's oil output passes through the strait.

Following Mr. Cohen's disclosure, the U.S. Senate has called on President Bill Clinton to adopt sanctions against China on the grounds that the sale of the C-801 anti-ship missiles violated a 1992 non-proliferation accord.

In Baghdad, the other key target of Mr. Cohen's attacks during the five-day tour, an official newspaper Wednesday blasted what it called U.S. efforts to dominate the region.

"Cohen came to dictate

his orders to the leaders of the region in the form of advice on the U.S. containment of Iraq and Iran," said the newspaper Babel, which is run by President Saddam Hussein's son Uday.

It said in an editorial headlined "U.S. blackmail" that the defence secretary "trampled on the honour of the Arabs and spoke to them as if he were their governor general."

Babel called for the Gulf Arabs "to wake up," noting that the tour came on the heels of a non-binding vote in the U.S. House of Representatives that recognised Israel's claim to the whole of Jerusalem as its capital.

"U.S. officers, meanwhile, voiced bitterness and fear of the heat, snakes and scorpions in the Saudi desert. But the real hell will be the fury of the Arabian Peninsula which will set ablaze the cowardly U.S. occupiers," it warned.

The paper was referring to Mr. Cohen's visit to U.S. troops posted in Saudi Arabia since the 1991 Gulf war which evicted Iraq from Kuwait.

Rabbis accused of laundering drug money through synagogue, yeshiva

NEW YORK (AP) — Two Orthodox rabbis and 10 others laundered \$750,000 in drug profits through a yeshiva and synagogue for Colombian dealers, federal prosecutors said.

"Money launderers are the indispensable partners of major drug traffickers," U.S. attorney Zachary W. Carter said Tuesday in a statement. "The cynical act of using religious institutions to conceal drug proceeds is particularly reprehensible."

Rabbis Mahir Reiss, 47, and Bernard Grunfeld, 67, were each released Tuesday on \$750,000 bond secured by property. Reiss' lawyer, Susan Kellman, said the complaint "is filled with a variety of gross distortions."

Grunfeld's lawyer, Benjamin Rosenberg, declined comment.

The rabbis conspired with 10 other people to launder \$750,000 in profits from Colombian drug dealers, according to the complaint signed by Howard Campbell, a special agent with the Drug

Enforcement Administration (DEA). They sifted cash through the bank accounts of Congregation Eitz Chaim and Bobover Yeshiva, both in Brooklyn, he wrote.

Mr. Campbell said they even used some of the laundered money to buy a Beech Super King plane, the kind often used by drug traffickers to smuggle narcotics from Colombia to the United States.

At one point, Reiss helped transfer \$2.4 million from a Swiss bank account to pay for the plane, which was flown in November 1994 from Florida to drug traffickers in Colombia, prosecutors said.

The rabbis and another go-between took between 12 per cent and 15 per cent of the laundered money as payment, the complaint said.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Lee G. Dunst said prosecutors were looking at an additional \$1 million that went through bank accounts of various religious organisations in Brooklyn that has not yet been linked to drug dealers.

Prosecutors said that as pres-

ident of the congregation and an officer of the Yeshiva, Grunfeld had access to bank accounts for both.

The charges came out of a 3-year-old probe by the DEA and the Internal Revenue Service into drug money laundering operations in Brooklyn, Manhattan and Long Island.

The complaint alleges the rabbis authorised about 95 cash withdrawals and deposits in various bank accounts between \$9,000 and \$9,999 from September 1994 and February 1997. Cash transactions of more than \$10,000 must be reported to the government.

There also was more than \$19 million deposited into accounts controlled by the rabbis during a 10-month period ending in May 1996, the complaint said.

The complaint said the rabbis worked directly with at least one drug trafficker.

An eight-count indictment handed up late Tuesday by a federal grand jury in Brooklyn contained various money laundering and conspiracy charges.

Israeli analyst says Likud cabinet working to abort peace process

By Francesca Ciriaci
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN Some members of the Israeli Likud government are preparing for war, to repel the Oslo accords and abort the peace process altogether, an Israeli analyst and writer warned on Wednesday.

In pursuing his "strategic goal of putting an end to the Oslo process," hard-liner Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is "provoking the Palestinians and cornering them in such a situation [they will be no longer able] ... to continue [peace] talks," said Amnon Kapeliok, who is also a prominent journalist.

The Israeli government's decisions to excavate a tunnel

under Al Aqsa mosque, one of the holiest shrines of Islam, last September, and to build a Jewish settlement in Jebel Abu Ghneim, in Arab east Jerusalem, last March, should not only be read as provocations, but are "signs that we are approaching a new conflict."

"The situation is very dangerous: There are some people in the [current Israeli] cabinet who think that the only solution is a new war, to create a new situation and begin negotiations from a different point," (more favourable to the Israeli political right), he said.

Mr. Netanyahu's call for "skipping" the interim agreement, to "jump" to the final status negotiations, also

serves this purpose, Mr. Kapeliok said.

"He [Mr. Netanyahu] says a final settlement can be reached in six months... How could it be possible, if it took seven months to implement the Hebron deal?" he asked, describing Mr. Netanyahu's statements as "demagogic."

Israeli troops were originally scheduled to be redeployed from the West Bank city of Hebron in June 1996, one week after general elections in Israel, but the victory of Mr. Netanyahu delayed the deal until November.

Mr. Kapeliok was speaking at a roundtable discussion on "Peace in the Middle East" with four other international top-analysts and authorities on Middle Eastern politics:

Norway's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Jan Egeland, the "facilitator" in the secret negotiations that led to the 1993 Oslo agreement between Israel and the Palestinians; Eric Rouleau, writer and former ambassador to Turkey and Tunisia; Tahseen Basheer, spokesperson for presidents Gamal Abdul Nasser and Anwar Sadat of Egypt, as well as key-negotiator of the 1979 Camp David peace agreement between Egypt and Israel; Tareq Ismail, author of tens of publications on the Middle East, including the recent "The Gulf War And The New World Order," and president of the Canada-based

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